THE FOUNDATIONS OF GERMANY

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THE

FOUNDATIONS OF GERMANY

A DOCUMENTARY ACCOUNT
REVEALING THE CAUSES OF HER STRENGTH,
WEALTH AND EFFICIENCY

BY
J. ELLIS BARKER
AUTHOR OF 'MODERN GERMANY,' ETC.

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PREFACE

INNUMERABLE books in the English language deal with German history and German political and economic affairs, but practically not one of these has touched the heart of things. None has revealed to us the mainsprings and hidden causes of Germany's power, Germany's efficiency, and Germany's economic success. None has displayed to us the principles of German statesmanship and diplomacy, and the factors which have shaped the national character and the national conscience of the people. An adequate account of the foundations of modern Germany does not exist in any language, not even in German. In the present volume such an account will be given for the first time. For its composition the writings, speeches, and state papers of Prusso-Germany's leading men from the time of the Great Elector to the present, have been ransacked. Hundreds of volumes which are to be found only in a few of the greatest libraries outside Germany have been drawn upon. Into a brief space all the most important pronouncements of Prusso-Germany's leading men on the greatest political questions have been compressed. The book contains within a few hundred pages the quintessence of German statesmanship in all its branches, and in the words of its most celebrated and most authoritative exponents.

Nations are what they are owing to their past. Modern Germany has been created by a few very eminent men such as the Great Elector, Frederick William the First, Frederick

the Great, Bismarck, Moltke; and Frederick was by far the greatest of these. As the action of modern Germany is based on the tradition which these men have created, we can fully understand Germany only by studying their teachings in word and deed. Not Bismarck, but Frederick the Great, was the maker of the German Empire and of the German nation. Frederick anticipated Bismarck's unification of the Empire under Prussian leadership by the creation of the Fürstenbund. He ruled Prussia during no less than forty-six years. He created during his long reign the traditions of modern Germany by his example and by his teachings. He left for the guidance of his successors a number of most important state papers. They are practically unknown to the English-speaking peoples, and they have hitherto not been reprinted in this country. Carlyle scarcely mentions them in his bulky historical volumes. They are little known even to the German public, but they are, and have been, the Bible of all Prusso-German statesmen. These most important papers are reproduced in full at the end of this volume. They are given in the original French—Frederick could scarcely write German—and it is to be hoped that they will be read and carefully studied not only by statesmen and publicists, but also by the general public and by the rising generation. It seems desirable that the present volume should serve as a text-book at schools and universities. Young men and women may learn French as well from the writings of Frederick the Great as from those of La Fontaine and Bossuet, of Molière and Fénélon. Besides, it is important that the citizens of the Anglo-Saxon democracies, who, after all, direct the policy of their country, should know something of the real Germany. It is important that they should not merely be acquainted with dry historical facts and dates, but that they should know something of real history and of real statesmanship.

Incidentally the book reveals the failings of Democracy, the defects of democratic organisation and administration.

It is no doubt possible to combine the advantages of democratic with those of autocratic government, liberty with efficiency, order, and economy. Democracy need not, and should not, be synonymous with disorganisation, instability, amateurishness, drift, muddle, waste, improvidence, and unpreparedness for war. The present war has revealed the weakness of Democracy. The views of the greatest German rulers and statesmen collected in this volume may indicate the cure. The experience of the present war may cause Germany to become more democratic and may cause the Anglo-Saxon democracies to become better organised. The views of Frederick the Great on the defects of democracy and of Cabinet Government should be particularly interesting at the present moment.

The first three chapters have previously been published in *The Nineteenth Century and After*. The fourth chapter has appeared in *The Contemporary Review*. Chapters VI, VII, and VIII have appeared in *The Fortnightly Review*. Chapters V, IX, X, XI, XII, and XIII are entirely new. I would herewith sincerely thank the Editors of the periodicals named for their permission to reprint these articles. They have been very widely commented upon, and have been republished not only in the British Dominions, in the United States, France, Russia, and Roumania, but even in China. I would, however, draw attention to the fact that these articles have not merely been reprinted, but that they have been very greatly expanded, and that they have provided only the nuclei of the chapters indicated.

The present volume is totally distinct from, and is complementary to, my book, 'Modern Germany' (Smith, Elder & Co., 7*s.* 6*d.* net), of which a fifth and very greatly enlarged edition was published in 1915. That book deals in nearly 900 pages exclusively with modern affairs, as may be seen from the sub-title, 'Her Political and Economic Problems, her Policy, her Ambitions, and the Causes of her Successes and of her Failures.' 'Modern Germany' has

been widely read throughout the Anglo-Saxon world. The fourth edition has been pirated in the United States, and the book has been translated even into Japanese. It is widely used as a book of reference, and I venture to hope that its successor will prove as popular and as useful to statesmen, politicians, educationalists, journalists, and public speakers.

April 1916. J. ELLIS BARKER.

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THE FOUNDATIONS OF GERMANY

CHAPTER I

THE FOUNDATIONS OF GERMANY'S STRENGTH, WEALTH AND EFFICIENCY[1]

Before the outbreak of the present war many very eminent, but very ill-informed, people publicly expressed the belief that Germany would not dare to go to war because the Powers ranged against her were too strong, because she was too poor, because her finances were in disorder. Immediately after its outbreak they proclaimed equally loudly that Germany would rapidly be defeated, that the combination of Franco-British wealth and of Russian numbers, of the greatest industrial and the greatest agricultural nation, of the largest army and the strongest fleet, would inevitably prove fatal to Germany, that before long the armies of the Allies would sweep all over Germany and enter Berlin. Since then many months have elapsed. The Allies have not yet succeeded in seizing firmly upon German soil. On the other hand, the Germans are still in possession of nearly all Belgium, and of Serbia, and they hold besides large and exceedingly valuable districts of North-eastern France and of Western Russia which contain some of the most important manufacturing centres.

[1] From the *Nineteenth Century and After*, July 1915.

Belgium, Poland, and North-eastern France have become German strongholds and German arsenals. Germany controls territories filled with fortresses and with machinery of every kind. Nor is this all. She has not only successfully defended her own country and invaded her neighbour States; she has in addition carefully organised the vast territories occupied by her troops and has thoroughly organised the defence of Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey as well. Lastly, she is providing Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey not only with an abundance of officers and soldiers, but also with money, arms, ammunition, and supplies of every kind. She is governing and administering three great States. Without Germany's help Turkey and Austria-Hungary would probably have been lost. Germany's great military achievements, her vast industrial and financial strength, the foresight and ability of her military and industrial leaders and of her administrators, and the unity and the unflinching devotion of her people in field and factory have amazed even the best informed.

At the moment the cry of national organisation is on everybody's lips. We are told that the British nation, that the whole British Empire, must be organised for war, that a perfectly organised nation such as Germany can be overcome only if all the human and material resources of the Empire are brought to bear upon the struggle. Unfortunately, most Englishmen have only a vague idea what national organisation means and involves. Since statesmanship, the science of the vital interests of the State, as Prince Metternich described it, is absolutely ignored by the British and American universities, Germany's national organisation and administration are practically unknown to the English-speaking peoples. Industrious investigators have described to us in detail the outside of certain German institutions and organisations, but they have failed to show us their mainsprings and spirit; and to reveal to us the true sources of Germany's strength,

wealth, and efficiency. In the following pages I will endeavour to describe the causes of Germany's marvellous military and economic achievements, and will show that the chief cause of Germany's strength is discipline. In doing this I shall give a large number of most important documents, nearly all of which have not previously been published in the English language.

German efficiency and thoroughness have been plants of slow growth. Germany's administrative policy was not created by Bismarck, nor was her military policy initiated by Moltke. If we wish to discover the sources of Germany's power, we must acquaint ourselves with the views and teachings of those great men who created Germany's administrative, military, financial, and economic policy, who created her traditions, who made modern Germany. We must look into the past to understand the present.

Three centuries ago Brandenburg-Prussia, which became a kingdom only in 1701, occupied probably a far lower position in Europe than that held by one of the Balkan States at present. The country had neither a national organisation nor an army. The people were poor, rude, uncultured, ignorant, and were devoid of a sense of unity and of patriotism. The Germans, as a race, are not particularly gifted. Man for man, Englishmen and Frenchmen are probably their superiors. However, a Government can make or unmake the character of a nation. The Germans have been made what they are by their masterful rulers, especially by Frederick William, the Great Elector, by King Frederick William the First, and by Frederick the Great. Pliable materials are most easily moulded. The success of the three greatest rulers of Prusso-Germany is perhaps largely attributable to the fact that they set to work on the most unpromising raw material, upon poor, ignorant, and submissive boors.

Frederick William, the Great Elector, was born in 1620,

and he came to the throne in 1640, at a time when the Thirty Years' War of 1618–48 was still raging. As a youth he had spent three years in Holland, which was then the wealthiest, the most advanced, and the most warlike country in the world. As Brandenburg-Prussia had been terribly devastated by the warring troops, he wished before all to create an army for its defence. However, he found it very difficult to raise the necessary money. Self-government prevailed in his scattered dominions. As the nobility and the Estates jealously defended their privileges and refused to vote the necessary funds, the Elector resolved to break their power and to place taxation on a compulsory basis.

He gradually destroyed popular representation, such as it was, and made the Estates a mere tool. At last they were called together exclusively for the purpose of voting money. They were allowed to sit only for a fortnight, and to discuss nothing except the proposals which the Elector put before them. At the same time, they were informed that any funds which they failed to vote would be collected from them by force, by 'military execution.' The written remonstrances and protests of his Parliament were usually returned unanswered. At last the Estates of Prussia declared in 1674 that they did not care to attend the Diet any longer because their gathering led to nothing except an increase in taxation. The Great Elector replied that he also did not see the necessity of a Diet which did nothing but complain and produce nothing but unnecessary expense and delay. Frederick William, like Bismarck, preferred governing without a parliament.

Soon after his advent the Great Elector raised a force of 3000 men. This was the first standing army of the Hohenzollerns, and it grew apace. In 1651, after eleven years of government, the Great Elector had an army of 16,000, and in the war of 1665 he was at the head of 26,000 men supplied with seventy-two guns. His soldiers were

highly trained and disciplined. By enormous exertions he had made Brandenburg-Prussia an important military Power.

The Great Elector ruthlessly and tyrannously suppressed existing self-government in his possessions, and gave to his scattered and parochially minded subjects a strong sense of unity. Relying upon his powerful army, he enforced his will upon the nobility, the Estates, and the citizens, and made himself the absolute master of the country. He ruled the State with savage energy and with great ability. To enable the people to bear the cost of a large army, he strove to increase their wealth by promoting agriculture, commerce, and the manufacturing industries. He imported from Holland skilled engineers who reclaimed swamps, and able farmers and gardeners who improved cultivation. Every peasant had to lay out a garden, and none might marry unless he had planted at least six oak trees, and had planted and grafted at least six fruit trees. To improve industry and commerce, he constructed the Frederick William Canal, connecting the Oder with the Spree and the Elbe, and numerous high roads, and introduced a modern system of posts and mails.

As his country had been depopulated by the Thirty Years' War, he wished to attract to it new inhabitants. By an Edict of October 29, 1685, he promised to the Huguenots who fled from France owing to the revocation of the Edict of Nantes assistance for defraying their travelling expenses, permission to settle where they liked, freedom to bring in their goods and chattels free of all charges. The needy were to receive empty houses which the Elector would buy from their owners. They were to be given building material of every kind for repairing these houses, and to be freed from all imposts for six years. The well-to-do who wished to build houses for themselves were to be given land and building materials, and to be free from all imposts for ten years. The rights of citizenship were to be given gratis.

Manufacturers and artisans were to receive machines, raw material, and monetary subsidies. Agriculturists were to obtain ground suitable for cultivation. The refugees were to be allowed to settle differences among themselves by voluntary courts of their own, and in every town a preacher was to be maintained for them at the Elector's cost. French noblemen were to enjoy equality with Prussian noblemen, &c.

As the French refugees might be deterred by the rigorous climate and the poverty of Brandenburg and migrate to Switzerland, England, and Holland instead, the Elector wisely tried to induce them to come to his country and remain there by granting them far more valuable facilities and privileges than they were offered elsewhere. The result of his policy was that many French refugees who had gone to Switzerland and Holland went later on to Brandenburg. According to Ancillon's 'Histoire de l'établissement des François Réfugiés,' there were, in 1697, 12,297 French refugees in Brandenburg, not counting the military.

Numerous French people settled in Berlin, brought to that town their industries, and raised the intelligence of the population by their culture, energy, and vivacity. The French immigrants and their descendants became most valuable citizens. They founded industries, entered the professions, and many of the most eminent Germans are direct descendants of the French refugees. Some maintained their French names, like De la Motte Fouqué, Michelet, Lestocq, Ancillon, De la Courbière. Others Germanised them. Among the descendants of the French refugees were the brothers Humboldt. At the end of the Great Elector's reign no less than one-fourth of the inhabitants of Prussia were foreign immigrants and descendants of foreign immigrants.

By the policy outlined the Great Elector greatly increased the population, the wealth, and the military power

of his country. By a skilful and daring diplomacy, and by the energetic use of his excellent army, which he had been able to create only by destroying the power of the Estates and by greatly increasing the wealth of the people, he vastly enlarged his territories and gave to the State a great prestige throughout Europe. Among his victories, that over the dreaded Swedes at Fehrbellin was the most glorious. During the forty-eight years of his wise, energetic, but ruthless, reign, the territory of Brandenburg-Prussia was increased by nearly 50 per cent. Its population rose from 1,000,000 to 1,500,000, notwithstanding wars, famine, and pestilence. The success of the civil administration of a country can be gauged largely by the revenue returns. During the rule of the Great Elector the State revenue of Brandenburg-Prussia increased, incredible as it may seem, nearly five-fold, from 500,000 to 2,500,000 thalers. He had found a poor, devastated country without order and without an army. He left a greatly enlarged State, a comparatively wealthy and much larger population, and a large and excellent army to his successor.

In 1688 the Great Elector died. His place was taken by Frederick the Third, who in 1701 assumed the royal crown and the title of King Frederick the First. Frederick was a vain and worthless monarch. Under his rule the country declined and decayed. Maladministration became general. However, he maintained and even increased the Prussian army. That was his only merit.

Under the inept rule of this Frederick, who tried to ape Louis the Fourteenth, and who wasted the national resources in vain ostentation, luxury, and debauchery, the lifework of the Great Elector was largely destroyed. The unification, concentration, and organisation of the Prussian administration and of the whole national life which that great ruler had effected and the efficiency which he had created were temporarily lost. Favourites and mistresses ruled and robbed the country, and the worthless King went

so far in the neglect of his duties that he handed to his Minister-favourites signed blanks to be filled with orders and instructions at their pleasure, thus saving himself the trouble of reading documents requiring his signature.

His son, Frederick William the First, was one of the most remarkable and one of the greatest rulers the world has seen. He is unknown to the English-speaking peoples, for Carlyle and Macaulay have made a caricature of him. His eminence as a ruler may be seen from the fact that Frederick the Great, in writing an account of his life, closed it with the words: 'As all the strength of the spreading oak has sprung from a little acorn, so the greatness of Prussia has sprung from the industrious life and the wise measures of Frederick William the First.' Frederick William was neither brilliant, nor had he winning ways. He was the organiser, the disciplinarian, the schoolmaster, the true maker of modern Germany. History which has named his son 'the Great' should call Frederick William the First 'the Thorough.'

The Great Elector had, as we have seen, destroyed the power of self-government and of obstruction in Prussia, and had thus cleared the way for his successors. Frederick William the First made use of the opportunity which his grandfather had thus provided, and founded in Prussia a perfectly organised modern State, a model administration, and created a perfectly equipped and ever ready army.

Frederick William was in every respect totally different from his father. He was uneducated, boorish, coarse, gluttonous, harsh, brutal, suspicious, domineering, grasping, impetuous, and filled with energy and determination. While he lacked nearly all the finer qualities, Nature had given him cunning, unlimited common sense, a passionate love of industry and orderliness, and a strong sense of acquisitiveness, qualities which are often found in illiterate

peasants who succeed in accumulating great wealth in a life of unceasing labour, strife, and penurious thrift.

Frederick William the First had watched life at the Prussian Court in his father's time with horror and disgust. He came to the government in 1713. Although he was only twenty-five years old and quite unacquainted with affairs of State, he immediately set to work in his rough and impulsive way to clear the Augean stable of Prussia, being determined to save it from bankruptcy and to introduce in it a regime of frugality, thrift, morality, and efficiency. His first action consisted in dismissing the great majority of the courtiers, reducing the royal expenditure to one-fifth, and applying the amount saved to increasing the army. He sold the bulk of the useless jewellery, plate, valuable furniture, horses, carriages, and wine which his spendthrift father had accumulated, and forced those who had robbed the State in his father's lifetime to disgorge. He sold or let all unnecessary royal edifices, and converted vast royal parks and pleasure gardens into ploughed fields and drill grounds. While, according to Beheim-Schwarzbach, the coronation of King Frederick the First had cost 6,000,000 thalers, his own cost only 2547 thalers and 9 pfennigs.

King Frederick William had seen the advantage of conscientious one-man rule in the case of the Great Elector. He resolved to administer Prussia autocratically, treating the whole country like a huge private estate, and to improve it in every direction to the utmost of his ability. He wrote on one of the first days of his government, according to Droysen, that he would be his own field-marshal and his own minister of finance. He might have added that he would be his own minister of war, agriculture, commerce, education, justice, religion, and home affairs as well. He ordered the affairs of the Church, and prescribed the nature of the services and of the sermons. In every sermon the duties of the subject, and especially the duty of paying the taxes punctually, had to be mentioned. Other creeds

were not to be attacked by the clergy. Sermons were to be short. If a sermon lasted longer than an hour the clergyman was to be fined two thalers. Frederick William despised those citizens who lived without productive work, especially lawyers, artists, scientists, actors, dancing-masters, and money-lenders, and he prosecuted usurers with the greatest energy. Usurers advancing money to minors could, by his edict of 1730, be punished with the confiscation of their entire capital, with a whipping, and even with death. He thought newspapers superfluous and wholly mischievous. He prosecuted them, and in 1713 and 1714 he prohibited their appearance in Berlin altogether.

Frederick William the First desired to strengthen Prussia and to increase its territories. Clearly recognising that wealth is power, and that only a disciplined, well-governed, and prosperous nation can provide a powerful army, he concentrated his boundless energy upon improving the national administration, increasing the wealth of the people, and strengthening the army. When Frederick William came to the throne the army was in a bad state and was 30,000 men strong. He rapidly increased it. In 1725 it came to 64,263 and in 1740, the year of his death, to 89,099 men. At that time Prussia had only 2,240,000 inhabitants. How enormous Prussia's army was may be seen by the fact that at the same proportion of armed men to the civil population, England would now have in peace time a standing army of nearly 2,000,000 men, and Germany one of nearly 3,000,000 men. By sleepless vigilance he made his army the most perfectly drilled and equipped and the most ready force in the world. Frederick the Great himself acknowledged in his writings that he owed his wonderful victories to the excellence of the army which his father had created by twenty-seven years of unceasing labour.

Frederick William worked unremittingly for the country from dawn till deep into the night. Field-Marshal Count von Seckendorf, the Austrian Ambassador in Berlin, a

most reliable observer, admiringly wrote on April 25, 1723, according to Arneth's 'Life of Prince Eugene':

It is certain that nowhere in the world one can see troops comparable with the Prussians for beauty, cleanliness, and order. Although in drill, training, and marching much is forced and affected, nearly everything is useful and efficient. Besides, it must be admitted that the army and the troops lack nothing that is needed. The soldiers number 70,000, and every regiment has at least a hundred more men than the normal figure. The Arsenal is superabundantly provided with field artillery and siege artillery, and only the teams are missing. Moreover, there is such an enormous store of powder, shot, and shells as if a great war was threatening. In Berlin and all about Brandenburg one sees as many troops moving as one saw in Vienna during the last war against the Turks. All this activity is directed by the King in person, and only by him. Besides, he looks after the whole public administration in all its branches with such care and thoroughness that not a thaler is spent unless he has given his signature. Those who do not see it cannot believe that there is any man in the world, however intelligent and able he may be, who can settle so many things personally in a single day as Frederick William the First, who works from 3 o'clock in the morning till 10, and spends the rest of the day in looking after and drilling his army. . . .

Frederick William the First created not only the German army, but also the German administration and the Civil Service. He made the German bureaucracy the ablest, the most hard-working, the most thorough and the most conscientious body of Government servants in the world. He created its traditions, and gave it that ability, zeal, and integrity which it has shown ever since.

Having punished severely those officials who had taken advantage of his father's neglect of public affairs, having dismissed the incompetent, and having reduced the salaries of the over-paid, he endeavoured to force thoroughness and good order upon the bureaucracy by his personal

example and supervision, and by the severe punishment of all who failed in their duty. However, the existing organisation could not be made to work smoothly and with despatch. When the King found that the departments could not be made to work in harmony, and when all the attempts of his ministers at reforming the service had failed, he retired to one of his country houses and drafted there in seclusion in his almost illegible hand and in very ungrammatical German the most comprehensive regulations for the reform of the Prussian administration. They may be found in Foerster's 'Life of Frederick William the First,' in which they fill more than a hundred pages. All the departments were to be harmonised by being united in a single body. The King gave the most minute orders regulating the proceedings of the 'General Directorate,' the supreme administrative authority of Prussia, and of the individual departments. The nature, thoroughness, and minuteness of his instructions will be seen from the following characteristic and amusing extract from the instructions to the General Directorate:

In summer the Ministers shall meet at 7 o'clock in the morning, and in winter at 8 o'clock.

The meeting shall not break up until all the matters which are to be discussed and decided upon have been disposed of. Not a single document must be left over for another day.

If the business in hand can be finished in an hour, the Ministers are free to go. If it cannot be settled in the forenoon, they must continue sitting without interruption until 6 o'clock in the evening or until all the business is completed.

We herewith order Our Minister von Printz that, if the Ministers are working later than 2 o'clock in the afternoon, he shall have fetched for them four good dishes of food from the royal kitchens, together with an adequate quantity of wine and beer. Half of the Ministers shall dine while the other half shall continue working, and those who are working shall dine as a second shift when those who were

dining have finished and are again at their work. In that way the work will be diligently and faithfully done. . . .

If one of the Ministers or one of their Councillors should arrive an hour later than we have ordered, and if he has not Our written permission for being late, one hundred ducats shall be deducted from his salary. If one of the Ministers or Councillors should miss an entire sitting without being prevented by illness or without having Our permission, he shall be fined by the deduction of six months' pay. If anyone should miss a second sitting without Our permission or without being ill he shall be dismissed from his office with disgrace, for as we pay our Ministers and Councillors they must work.

With regard to the dinner of the Cabinet and the Councillors, Minister von Printz received further instructions :

The head cook must at every sitting inquire at eleven o'clock through a servant whether he should provide dinner or not. Now we order herewith that in case dinner should be required by the Ministers and high officials there shall always be four good dishes, namely a good soup, a good piece of boiled beef with vegetables, a good dish of fish, and a good piece of roast beef, mutton, or veal.

In addition there should be a quart bottle of good Rhine wine for every person. However, the bill of fare should not always be the same. There should always be a change of dishes. The food should always be the same as that which is put before their Majesties themselves. It shall be served only by a single servant, for otherwise the room will be crowded with servants. To reduce the number of servants, every one of the Ministers shall receive together four plates and a glass, and a large basket shall be provided into which the soiled plates can be put.

Frederick William had the highest conception of duty. He lived not for himself or for his family, but for his country. He worked most conscientiously and like a strenuous business man. Thoughts of his duties constantly disturbed his sleep. Not unnaturally he demanded that all his officials

should be as hard-working and as thorough as he was himself. He treated his ministers as unceremoniously as he did his non-commissioned officers if they neglected their duty. In speaking of the Prussian Administration he habitually called it 'my machine.' It became indeed a machine absolutely controlled by the King. It acted with precision and speed, like clockwork. His officials had to work unceasingly and rapidly, but they were not allowed to become mere mechanical tools, for intelligence was as much demanded of them as was industry. Isaacsohn in his excellent three-volume work, 'Geschichte des preussischen Beamtenthums,' described the reforms introduced by Frederick William the First as follows:

The Prussian Civil Service was organised and developed on military lines. In the Prussian Civil Service, as in the army, skill, obedience, punctuality, cleanliness, and determination became the first and most indispensable qualifications. Official positions were given only to those who possessed a thorough practical knowledge of their office, and whose appointment was an obvious advantage to their superiors and to the State. The military spirit which permeated Prussia since the time of Frederick William the First filled the whole body of officialdom to the highest degree, and caused Prussia to be called a military State. Already as Crown Prince, Frederick William wore chiefly a military uniform, and after 1725 he appeared exclusively in military dress. . . .

The great characteristic of the new Prussian bureaucracy was the absolute responsibility of every official. None could hide behind another's back or behind a piece of paper, or plead that he had misunderstood his orders, that others were responsible. If a mistake had been made the culprit could invariably be found and punished. Isaacsohn tells us:

Never before had the officials so urgently and so unceasingly had impressed upon them the fact that they were

personally responsible, and never before had personal responsibility so sternly been enforced. . . . The principle of personal responsibility was the great characteristic feature of the instructions given by the King to his Ministers. Every document put by the higher officials before the General Directorate had to be signed by one of the Councillors who, by giving his signature, assumed responsibility for its contents, and every document put before the King bore in addition the signatures of the five departmental Ministers. . . .

No Councillor was to be employed in the province to which he belonged, in order to abolish favouritism and personal considerations of every kind. Officials were to act with absolute impartiality. . . . That was particularly necessary because the nobility and the prosperous citizens, from whose ranks the higher officials were recruited, were not in sympathy with the administrative and financial reforms introduced by the King. . . .

The absolute subordination of the Civil Service from the highest to the lowest, their unquestioning obedience to the King, together with their absolute responsibility not only for their own actions, but also for those of their colleagues and their inferiors, created among them an extremely strong sense of professional honour, solidarity, and of professional pride. The influence of the nobility and of Society diminished unceasingly. The service of the King required undivided attention. The King's uniform, which every Civil Servant had to wear when on duty, kept the feeling alive among them that they were the King's servants and had to represent the King's interests. The power of the officials and their independence, in case they were opposed by strong social influences, was increased by the fact that the officials were strangers in the districts in which they were employed, for Frederick William continued the policy of appointing only strangers to the district to official positions, a policy which the Great Elector had introduced in order to overcome the opposition of the Estates in his policy of centralisation and of unlimited personal Government. . . .

Every official document had to be signed, and every signature involved the responsibility of the man who gave

it. The members of the Ministry were jointly responsible for one another. Every mistake, every error, every delay was visited on the guilty. The greatest exertions were demanded from all officials. Remonstrances and protests were useless. The King enforced discipline absolutely, and his servants had either to obey or to go under. The discipline enforced had the most marvellous results. He taught the officials to work with exactitude, rapidity, conscientiousness, and care, and thus Prussian officialdom became a model throughout Germany.

Ministers of State, like generals and colonels, obeyed unquestioningly and carried out their orders with military precision and punctuality. Only if the King had clearly acted in error they ventured upon a respectful protest. Every Minister, even if he were personally easy-going and soft-hearted, was compelled in his own interest to maintain in his department the same rigid spirit of order, punctuality, and rapidity which the King enforced upon his Ministers, and from the Minister's room the spirit of order and efficiency spread through the departments and through all ranks down to the humblest officials.

Frederick William hated flattery, and demanded from all his officials brevity and the naked truth. An official who had deceived him was lost. In his instructions to the General Directorate he stated emphatically in specially large print :

We do not wish in any way to be treated with flattery. We wish always to hear the clear truth. Nothing must be hidden from Us, and no falsehood must be put before Us, for We are the Lord and King and can do what We like.

In order to ensure the integrity and efficiency of the Prussian Administration and of the whole body of officials, Frederick William created a special authority, the ' Fiskalat,' which, by means of agents, was to supervise and watch all the officials and to bring every irregularity directly before the King. In his instructions to the chief of the

Fiskalat, von Kattsch, the King wrote with his own hand : ' Von Kattsch shall not spare anyone, whoever it may be, even if it be my own brother. He must, of course, carefully look out for thieves of every kind. He must watch all and spare none, and he may be assured that I shall support him with energy against all as long as I live.' The monthly and quarterly reports of the Fiskalat enabled the King to deal rapidly with every abuse, trace it to its very source, and punish the guilty.

A government which governs can easily form the character and the habits of the people. The German people are often praised for their thoroughness, industry, frugality, and thrift. These qualities are not natural to them. They received them from their rulers, and especially from Frederick William the First. He was an example to his people, and his son carried on the paternal tradition. Both Kings acted not only with thoroughness, industry, frugality, and economy, but they enforced these qualities upon their subjects. Both punished idlers of every rank of society, even of the most exalted. The regime of Thorough prevailed under these Kings, who together ruled during seventy-three years. These seventy-three years of hard training gave to the Prussian people those sterling qualities which are particularly their own, and by which they can easily be distinguished from the easy-going South Germans and Austrians who have not similarly been disciplined.

Frederick William the First was a stern disciplinarian, not only to his people, but even to his family. When his son and heir tried to flee the country in order to escape the bodily violence which he had to suffer from his father, Frederick William wished to have him shot by a court-martial as a deserter, although he loved his children, for duty, as he conceived it, was with him a stronger sentiment than affection. The harshness of Prussian education and the absolute discipline enforced in the Prussian families

and the Prussian schools are due to the example of the man who not only created the Prussian State but moulded the character of the German people upon his own.

Following the example of the Great Elector, King Frederick William strove to increase the wealth of the people, by improving communications and agriculture, by encouraging commerce and industry, and by settling numerous foreigners on the waste lands in his dominions. He drained swamps, constructed canals and roads, and on June 3, 1713, three months after he had come to the throne, he demanded that all the supplies for the army should be bought in Prussia. Only then it was discovered how low the Prussian industries had sunk. To raise them, Frederick William protected the manufacturing industries, especially the woollen industry, and forbade in his instructions to the General Directorate the investment of Prussian capital abroad.

How lavishly the thrifty King spent money for the improvement of the country may be seen by the fact that, although the whole income of the State amounted only to 7,400,000 thalers per year, he spent in the course of six years 6,000,000 thalers for improving the Province of Lithauen alone. He created there a number of towns, 332 villages, twenty-four water-mills, eleven churches, hundreds of schools, &c.

The Germans are perhaps the best educated people, and they have Frederick William to thank for it, for he was the first monarch who introduced compulsory education. It aimed at making the people useful and patriotic citizens. On September 28, 1717, Frederick William published an edict, which stated :

We regret that we have noticed that parents, particularly in the country, omit to send their children to the schools, and allow them to grow up in ignorance not only of reading, writing, and reckoning, but also in the knowledge of those things which are necessary for their soul and their salvation.

In order to abolish this most pernicious evil we have resolved to publish this edict and to order most earnestly that in those places where there are schools parents shall be compelled by severe punishment to send their children to school daily in winter and at least once or twice a week in summer, when they are not wanted at home, so that they shall not forget entirely in the summer what they have learned in winter. The children shall pay 2 dreiers per week to the schools, and if the parents cannot afford it, the school money shall be paid by the Local Authorities.

While Frederick William promoted elementary education, recognising its practical utility, his peasant-like ignorance prevented him understanding the use of the sciences and arts. He despised higher education, learning, and the arts of civilisation, to the despair and dismay of his son and heir, who loved them. He made learned professors court fools, and made his court fools university professors. Hence, Prussia remained a land of boors and soldiers, and Frederick the Great believed to his death that Germany was an unsuitable soil for the sciences and arts, that German was and always would remain a barbarous tongue, that the arts and sciences could not flourish in Prussia, and he surrounded himself with Frenchmen.

King Frederick William was a great organiser and administrator. He created the framework of the Prussian State and its traditions, and impressed his own character upon the nation. However, he did not possess the gifts of a great commander, and still less those of a diplomat. His boorish roughness, his impetuousness, and his choleric temperament prevented him securing any success in the field of diplomacy. Therefore, he obtained only an insignificant accession of territory. However, owing to his excellent administration and his thrift, he built for the future. He enormously increased the strength and the efficiency of the country. He trebled the national revenues. He greatly increased the wealth and the number of the

people. He vastly improved the land. He nearly trebled the army, made it the most efficient force in the world, and accumulated a vast store of war material and a large War Fund, with the help of which his son acquired Silesia and successfully resisted nearly all Europe during the Seven Years' War.

The Great Elector prepared the ground, King Frederick William the First firmly laid the foundations, and Frederick the Great erected thereon the edifice of modern Germany.

The strength of Germany lies in her form of government, as shaped by her rulers. She owes her power to her great sovereigns. The Great Elector and Frederick William the First were not men of many words. They were men of action. They practised an enlightened absolutism, but did not preach it. While sovereigns like Louis the Fourteenth of France and Frederick the First of Prussia used their absolute power chiefly for gratifying their vanity, their greed, and their lust, men like the Great Elector and Frederick William the First saw in their power a trust. They worked with all their might for the greatness and glory of their country and for posterity, and they crushed all opposition, and made themselves absolute masters of the State in order to increase the efficiency of their action.

Frederick the Great's character widely differed from that of his father. He was a man both of action and of words. He possessed eloquence, imagination, and a fluent pen—he would have made an excellent journalist—and he both practised and preached an enlightened absolutism. He gave eloquent expression to the faith within him, and he tried to make the people understand the policy of their rulers and to make them partners in their Sovereign's glory.

Frederick the Great was the most gifted and the most successful Prussian monarch. He was a great strategist, a great tactician, a great diplomat, a great economist and financier, a great organiser, and a great administrator.

As he had been most successful in all his undertakings,

it is only natural that his views and teachings have always enjoyed the greatest prestige in the highest Prusso-German circles, and that they have deeply influenced the action of his successors and of their statesmen. Among the numerous writings which he left, his confidential memoirs written for the guidance of future generations and his 'Political and Military Testaments' are of course most authoritative. Among the many pupils of Frederick the Great was Bismarck. It is no exaggeration to say that the writings which Frederick the Great addressed to posterity are the *arcana imperii* of modern Germany. Those who desire to learn the secret of Germany's strength, wealth, and efficiency, should therefore most carefully study the teachings of Frederick the Great.

Frederick's 'Political Testament' of 1752, addressed to his successors, begins with the significant words:

> The first duty of a citizen consists in serving his country: I have tried to fulfil that duty in all the different phases of my life.

The idea that the King is merely the first citizen, and that his duty consists in serving his country with all his strength and all his ability runs through the writings of Frederick the Great. In his later memoirs he elaborated that idea. For instance, in his 'Essai sur les Formes de Gouvernment,' written in 1777, twenty-five years after his first 'Political Testament,' he stated:

> The citizens have accorded pre-eminence to one of their number only because of the services which he can render them. These services consist in maintaining the laws, in meting out justice, in opposing with all his strength the deterioration of morals, in defending the State against its enemies.
>
> The ruler should carefully watch the cultivation of the soil. He should provide an abundance of food for the people, encourage industry, and further commerce. He ought to

be like a sentinel who watches unceasingly the neighbours of the State and the activities of its enemies.

It is necessary that the sovereign should act with foresight and prudence and conclude alliances in good time, and he ought to choose his Allies among those who are most likely to promote the interests of his country.

Each of the functions named requires a wealth of knowledge from the sovereign. He must study profoundly the physical conditions of his country, and should thoroughly know the spirit and character of the people, for an ignorant sovereign is as guilty as an ill-disposed one. Ignorance in the ruler is due to his laziness, while malice springs from an evil mind. However, the sufferings caused by his mistakes are as great in the one case as in the other.

Princes, sovereigns, and kings have not been given supreme authority in order to live in luxurious self-indulgence and debauchery. They have not been elevated by their fellow-men to enable them to strut about and to insult with their pride the simple-mannered, the poor, and the suffering. They have not been placed at the head of the State to keep around themselves a crowd of idle loafers whose uselessness drives them towards vice. The bad administration which may be found in monarchies springs from many different causes, but their principal cause lies in the character of the sovereign. A ruler addicted to women will become a tool of his mistresses and favourites, and these will abuse their power and commit wrongs of every kind, will protect vice, sell offices, and perpetrate every infamy. . . .

The sovereign is the representative of his State. He and his people form a single body. Ruler and ruled can be happy only if they are firmly united. The sovereign stands to his people in the same relation in which the head stands to the body. He must use his eyes and his brain for the whole community, and act on its behalf to the common advantage. If we wish to elevate monarchical above republican government, the duty of sovereigns is clear. They must be active, hard-working, upright and honest, and concentrate all their strength upon filling their office worthily. That is my idea of the duties of sovereigns.

A sovereign must possess an exact and detailed knowledge of the strong and of the weak points of his country. He must be thoroughly acquainted with its resources, the character of the people, and the national commerce. . . .

Rulers should always remind themselves that they are men like the least of their subjects. The sovereign is the foremost judge, general, financier, and minister of his country, not merely for the sake of his prestige. Therefore, he should perform with care the duties connected with these offices. He is merely the principal servant of the State. Hence, he must act with honesty, wisdom, and complete disinterestedness in such a way that he can render an account of his stewardship to the citizens at any moment. Consequently, he is guilty if he wastes the money of the people, the taxes which they have paid, in luxury, pomp, and debauchery. He who should improve the morals of the people, be the guardian of the law, and improve their education should not pervert them by his bad example.

Frederick took his regal duties very seriously. Like his father he worked indefatigably and unceasingly for his country. He rose in summer at three o'clock, and in winter at four o'clock, and a quarter of an hour later he was at his desk. Like his father he worked much and slept little, and set an example of industry and thoroughness to his subjects.

His capacity for work was prodigious. Like Frederick William the First he supervised the army and the Civil Service in all its branches. In addition, he conducted personally the enormous business of his very active diplomacy, and as chief of the staff he planned his campaigns.

He was ready to practise that absolute devotion to the State which he preached in his writings. That may be seen by his unceasing activity. It may also be seen by the fact that he was prepared to lay down his life for his country not only in the heat of battle but in cold deliberation. He repeatedly gave instruction that, if made a prisoner, he should be sacrificed for Prussia. On January 10,

1757, for instance, during the second year of the Seven Years' War, when Prussia's position was critical, he sent the following instructions to his Minister and confidential friend and adviser, Count Fink von Finkenstein :

In the critical position of Prussia's affairs, I must give you my orders. These will empower you to take all the necessary measures in case of a great misfortune.

(1) If, which Heaven forbid, one of my armies should be completely defeated in Saxony, or if the French should drive the Hanoverians out of the country, occupy Hanover, and threaten to invade Brandenburg itself, or if the Russians should penetrate into Brandenburg, the royal family, the Highest Courts of Justice, and the Departments of State must be brought into a place of security. If we are defeated in Saxony about Leipzig, the most suitable place for the royal family and the treasure is Küstrin. If the Russians should advance into Brandenburg, or if a disaster should overwhelm us in Lusatia, everything must be brought to Magdeburg. The last place of refuge is Stettin, but it must be resorted to only in case of the utmost necessity. The garrison, the royal family, and the treasure are inseparable. They always go together. To the treasure must be added the crown diamonds and the royal table silver. In case of need the royal silver and the gold plate must be melted down without delay.

(2) If I should be killed in action, the national business must be carried on without the slightest change. Nobody must notice that the government has changed hands. The rendering of the oath and the act of homage to the new ruler should take place as quickly as possible throughout Prussia, and especially in Silesia.

(3) I might have the misfortune of being made prisoner by the enemy. In that case, I absolutely prohibit that the slightest consideration be paid to my person and that any notice whatever be taken of the letters which I may write from my place of confinement. In case of such a misfortune I will sacrifice myself to the State. Everyone must obey my brother, and he and all my ministers and generals are

responsible to me with their heads that neither territory nor money is offered to the enemy in exchange for my liberty, that the war will be continued, that all advantages for defeating the enemy will be made use of, that matters will be treated as if I had never existed.

I hope and believe that you, Count Fink, will not find it necessary to make use of the orders contained in this letter. However, in case of misfortune I empower you herewith to carry out these instructions, and as a token that they embody my firm and constant will, and that they have been given after thorough and careful deliberation, I sign this letter with my own hand and append to it my own seal.

Frederick concentrated his whole energy and ability upon the government and the advancement of his country, and he desired that his successors also should manage themselves the entire business of the State. In order to enable them to fulfil this heavy task, he considered that a special education was required.

In a State such as Prusso-Germany the education of the future ruler is of course a matter of supreme importance, for the fate of the country depends upon the character and ability of the monarch. Therefore, the instructions which Frederick the Great wrote for the education of his nephew and successor, and sent to Major Borcke on September 24, 1751, when the heir-presumptive was seven years old, are of the highest interest and importance to all who wish to understand the policy and character of modern Germany and the causes of its success, for it may be said that Frederick's instructions have guided all his successors in the education of their heirs. The following are the most interesting passages from that most important document:

I entrust to you the education of my nephew, the Heir-Presumptive of Prussia. As there is a great difference between the education of the child of a private citizen and of a child that will be called upon to rule the State, I herewith give you my instructions for your guidance. . . .

The boy should learn history, but not like a parrot. The great utility of history consists in enabling us to compare the present with the past. The intelligent study of history shows the causes which have brought about vast changes in the world. It shows besides that, generally speaking, vice is punished and virtue rewarded. Attention must be drawn to the fact that the ancient writers are not always reliable, and that one must critically examine their statements before believing them. . . .

The greatest and most important part of education consists in shaping the character. Neither you nor all the powers of the world can change the character of a child. Education can only moderate its passions and instincts.

You should treat my nephew like an ordinary child that will be called upon to succeed by its own exertions. Reproach the boy for his faults, and tell him that he will be despised by all if he will not learn. He must not be allowed to become conceited. He should be brought up quite simply. He must be courteous towards all, and must be made to apologise immediately if he has been rude to anybody. He must be taught that all men are equal, and that exalted birth without exalted merit is worthless. Let him talk freely to all. That will make him self-possessed. It does not matter if he talks nonsense, for he is only a child. His whole education should be directed with the aim of making him self-reliant. He should not be guided by others. Whether he speaks foolishly or wisely, his ideas should only be his own.

It is very important that he should love the army. Therefore he must be told at all occasions and by all whom he meets that men of birth who are not soldiers are pitiful wretches. He must be taken to see the troops drilling as often as he likes. He ought to be shown the Cadets, and be given five or six of them to drill. That should be an amusement for him, not a duty. The great point is that he should become fond of military affairs, and the worst that could happen would be if he should become bored with them. He should be allowed to talk to all, to cadets, soldiers, citizens, and officers, to increase his self-reliance.

It is particularly important that he should learn to love his country, and that all people whom he meets should utter only patriotic sentiments. With all questions discussed some moral ideas might be connected. He should learn to love humanity and kindness, sentiments which grace all honourable men, and particularly princes.

My nephew will, when he becomes older, begin to do service as a lieutenant. He must pass gradually through all the ranks. That will prevent him becoming conceited. The officers who dine with him should contradict and tease him freely to make him self-possessed and bright. He should see as much of the world as possible. . . . At every opportunity you should inculcate in him love and respect for his father and mother and for his relatives. You will find out his passions, but you must try to moderate, but not to destroy them. He should never do anything without good reason, except during his hours of recreation. For minor transgressions he should be scolded. For greater ones he should be punished by being deprived of his sword, by being placed under arrest, and by other punishments likely to appeal to his sense of honour.

Report to me about him every month, and more often if necessary. Do not make him timid by showing too much anxiety about his health and safety. Great care must of course be taken of him, but he must not notice it. Otherwise he will become soft, timid, and nervous. These instructions are valid only till the child is ten or twelve years old.

Prussia has been a military State since its beginning. The country has grown great by successful wars and by conquest. Frederick William the First not only created a powerful army but militarised the administration and the civil institutions as well. He made the entire civil life of the country subservient to his military requirements and ambitions. Frederick the Great clearly recognised that the future of Prussia would depend upon its army, and upon the military strength of the country as a whole, that it needed a form of government which was most likely to

increase the power of the State. The activity of the Great Elector, of Frederick William the First, and his own achievements had shown him how greatly an able monarch, who is entirely unhampered by popular interference and control, can advance a naturally poor and weak country.

Frederick was deeply convinced of the superiority of monarchical over democratic government in administrative matters in general, and especially in matters of foreign policy and of war. A military State, like an army, should, in his opinion, be governed not by an Administration, not by statesmen and generals, but by a commander-in-chief, by the Sovereign himself. He showed an unlimited contempt for feeble sovereigns, for the weakness and inefficiency of the then existing republics, such as Holland, and for those States which under monarchical forms were democratically governed, such as England. He repeatedly described England as a republic in disguise and sneered at its army. He frequently expressed his opinion that monarchy was a far more efficient form of government, especially in war, than democracy. He wrote, for instance, in his 'Lettre sur l'Amour de la Patrie':

A monarch is not a despot, whose only rule of conduct is his caprice. He must be the centre of the State where all the lines from the circumference unite. A monarchical government can maintain in its deliberations that secrecy which is absent in republics, and the various branches of the administration can act together like a well-trained team of horses. Besides in monarchies party spirit is far less rampant than in republics, which are often plagued by party strife and by party intrigue.

In his 'Histoire de mon Temps,' Frederick wrote:

Sweden which, under Gustavus Adolphus, had been a land of heroes became the home of cowardice and infamy under a republican government. Thus kingdoms and

empires may decline and fall after having risen to the greatest glory. The cause of Sweden's decline may probably be found in the change in the form of its government. While Sweden was a monarchy, the army was honoured. It was efficient for the defence of the State, and could never become a public danger.

In republics the government must, by its very nature, be peaceful, and the military must be kept down, for the politicians in power are afraid of generals who are worshipped by their troops and who may bring about a revolution. In republics men of ambition can obtain power only by intrigue. Thus corruption arises and destroys public morality. The true sense of honour is lost. All try to succeed by intrigue. Besides, in republics secrecy is never observed in matters of State. The enemy knows their plans beforehand and can foil them. . . .

When Sweden was turned into a republic it became weak. The love of glory was replaced by the spirit of intrigue. Disinterestedness was replaced by cupidity. The public welfare was sacrificed to individual advantage. Corruption went so far that in the Swedish Parliament sometimes the French and sometimes the Russian party was supreme, but never the Swedish.

The views expressed by Frederick regarding the republic of Sweden should give food for thought to Englishmen and Americans. Democracy, both in the monarchical and in the republican form, provides undoubtedly a less efficient government than a monarchy. In democracies party spirit proves only too often more powerful than patriotism. While party interests are promoted those of the nation are disregarded and suffer neglect. Besides, democracies are administered not by men of action but by men of words, by amateurs whose position depends on the popular will and upon the popular whim. Consequently, nearly every Government measure brought forward in a democratic State is determined not on its merits, not by its national utility or necessity, but by the question: Will it be

popular or unpopular? Will it gain or lose votes? Will it strengthen or weaken the politicians in power or the Opposition? Besides, every measure, however secret, must be discussed in public although public discussion may imperil the existence of the State. While a monarch in a well-organised monarchy such as Germany can, in a time of danger, command and thus employ the whole national resources to the best advantage without delay, the head of a democratic Government can hope to unite the citizens and impel them to action only by begging and imploring, by exhorting and beseeching them to do their duty.

A modern democracy, like an old-fashioned charity, is run on voluntary contributions. A democracy has not one master, but many masters. Every democratic citizen claims for himself the right to decide whether he will obey or not, for he is one of the sovereigns. In the words of the judicious Bagehot: 'The natural instinct of Englishmen is to resist authority.' Politicians pander to the electors, and thus the people in democracies are taught that they have rights, but not that they had duties. Many months after the beginning of a war in which Great Britain's existence is at stake, the politicians who had prevented and opposed the tuition of patriotism in the schools began teaching the citizens by posters, by the methods of patent medicine vendors, the duty of defending their country.

Organisation in time of a crisis can be efficient only if the men in power can command, and if those over whom they have authority are certain to obey. Democracy is government by argument. It does not organise, but it disorganises, and the men in authority are afraid to order men to fight or to work because every democrat claims for himself the right to do what he likes, the right to resist authority. The German Government has opposed parliamentary institutions to the utmost, and has given to the Parliament which it has granted to the people merely the

power of a suburban debating society, not so much because the rulers and the aristocracy were jealous of their privileges, but because they feared, and rightly feared, that the democratisation of Germany would destroy its power, and would prove fatal to the country in case of war.

Circumstances have made Prussia a military State. The country has grown great by its military strength. Frederick clearly recognised that the existence and the future of Prussia depended upon the army. Therefore the army was his principal care. It was to be an army not for show and for parade, but exclusively for use in war. In his 'Political Testament' of 1752 he wrote: 'The army must be managed in peace in such a manner as to make it as efficient as possible in case of war.' Nothing was to be left to chance. Preparation down to the smallest details was unceasingly recommended by Frederick. Prussia was to rely in war not on her Allies, but entirely on her own unaided strength. The King wrote in his 'Essai sur les Formes de Gouvernement':

> The size of the national army must depend on the strength of possible enemies. A ruler cannot safely reckon upon his Allies, for these do not always fulfil their obligations, or they fulfil them only in part. Those who count upon the strength of their Allies as upon their own are sure to be deceived.

Frederick thought it of the highest importance that the Sovereign himself should direct and command the army. He wrote in his 'Political Testament' of 1776:

> If the sovereign himself does not manage the army and does not set an example to his people in military matters all is lost. If the ruler shows by his actions that he prefers the loafing courtiers to his officers, all men will prefer idling at court to working hard in the army.

In his 'Political Testament' of 1752 he wrote:

> That ruler rules best who has carefully laid down his

policy and who rules himself. He will not be hampered at the moment when a decision must promptly be made, for he holds all the threads in his own hands. It is particularly important for him that he should possess as much knowledge as possible of all military details.

Men who are not soldiers are ill-fitted for devising a plan of campaign, especially if they are unacquainted with all the military technicalities, the knowledge of which is indispensable. He who does not know the need of an army, who is not acquainted with its thousand and one requirements, who does not know how an army is mobilised, and who is unacquainted with the art of war, who neither knows how to keep discipline among troops in peace time, nor how to lead them in time of war, will never succeed in conducting a war even if he should be a most able man and statesman, economist, and financier.

I wish to convince my successors that it is necessary for every King of Prussia to make war his particular study and to encourage those who wish to take up the noble and dangerous profession of arms.

As Prussia is surrounded by powerful States my successors must be prepared for frequent wars. The soldiers must be given the highest positions in Prussia for the same reason for which they received them in ancient Rome when that State conquered the world. Honours and rewards stimulate and encourage talent, and praise arouses men to a generous emulation. It encourages men to enter the army. It is paradoxical to treat officers contemptuously and call theirs an honoured profession. The men who are the principal supports of the State must be encouraged and be preferred to the soft and insipid society men who can only grace an ante-chamber.

Only the sovereign can create and maintain perfect discipline, for only he can act with authority, and blame and punish severely according to desert without respect to birth and rank. Only he can liberally reward the deserving, can constantly review the troops and keep them efficient. Therefore the King of Prussia should be a soldier and should be himself the Commander-in-Chief. . . .

Monarchies are disgraced by soft and idle rulers who leave the command of their troops to their generals, and thus tacitly avow their pusillanimity and their incapacity.

Those who have asserted in the past that civilian politicians are fit to manage the army and navy, and that a Cabinet, a number of politicians, can make plans of war, will do well to ponder on Frederick the Great's testamentary views.

Frederick was of opinion that the quality of the army depends in the first instance upon the ability and character of the commander. He was exceedingly careful in selecting men for high command, and he wrote in his 'Guerre de Sept Ans':

The ability and determination of a general are more decisive in war than the number of soldiers. . . .

Generally speaking, towns are defended neither by their fortifications nor by the strength of their garrison, for all depends on the ability, courage, and determination of their commander.

The perfect discipline of the German army has surprised many observers. At the word of command German soldiers will act like automata, perform the greatest deeds of valour, or commit the most shocking crimes. That perfect discipline which makes men machines in time of war was created by Frederick William the First and was recommended as indispensable by Frederick the Great. The latter wrote in his 'Political Testament' of 1752:

Military discipline makes the troops absolutely obedient. It makes blindly obedient the soldier to his officer, the officer to his colonel, the colonel to his general, and the generals to the commander-in-chief. A soldier who murmurs against a non-commissioned officer, or who draws his weapon against him, and an officer who draws his weapon against his commander, must be punished with death, for no clemency is possible towards those who violate the rules of discipline.

Insubordination supplies a dangerous example. The slightest loosening of the bonds of discipline would create a spirit of lawlessness and of mutiny, and would force the commanders to obey their men. Therefore the generals and colonels are given a despotic power over their regiments.

The commanders must be responsible to the sovereign with their lives for the obedience of their men. Hence a ruler is certain that his orders will be carried out. Strict discipline makes the troops so accustomed to absolute obedience that they no longer know how to disobey. They will neither grumble, nor argue, nor complain. They will do what they are told, act according to orders, expose themselves to the greatest dangers, and go to their death at the word of command. They will follow their officers and perform deeds of marvellous valour.

Discipline fills and regulates the lives of the soldiers, prevents them using violence, stealing, drinking, and gambling, and causes them to return to their quarters at the appointed time. Thus discipline will be better observed among soldiers in the army than among monks in a monastery. Absolute subordination through all grades makes the whole army dependent upon the will of a single man, the ruler, and if he is a skilful general he need only give his orders, for he can be certain that they will be carried out with exactitude.

In a democracy in which indiscipline is general, where men in authority can request, but not command, where the army is controlled by civilian politicians, the maintenance of perfect military discipline is of course impossible. Moreover, the English soldier has two masters: his officer and the law. If he shoots at the word of command he may be hanged for murder. That conception alone suffices to destroy a perfect sense of discipline in the army.

Frederick kept the greatest secrecy with regard to Prussian affairs. His opponents were rarely able to anticipate the King's plans. On the other hand, Frederick was determined to become acquainted with the intentions

of his possible enemies. With this object in view he developed a most perfect system of espionage in all the countries in which Prussia was chiefly interested. The King wrote in his memoirs :

If one wishes to oppose the plans of one's enemies one must know their plans.

Natural allies are those States the interests of which are identical with our own. Nevertheless alliances may be concluded among nations the interests of which differ, although they will be only short-lived.

In the present position of Europe all States are strongly armed, and as a Power of superior strength can destroy the weaker ones, it is necessary to conclude alliances either for mutual defence or for foiling the plans of one's enemies. However, alliances by themselves do not suffice. It is necessary to have in one's neighbour States, and especially among one's enemies, agents who report faithfully all they see and hear. Men are bad. It is most necessary to protect oneself against being surprised.

Germany's financial strength and her financial preparedness for war have surprised all observers, except those who are acquainted with Prusso-Germany's financial policy, and with her financial preparedness for war in the past. Here also Frederick William the First, and especially Frederick the Great, have created a tradition by which Germany continues to be guided.

Finance is a most powerful weapon in war, and none understood its importance better than Frederick the Great. He wrote in his ' Political Testament ' of 1752 :

If a country wishes to be happy and respected it is necessary that good order in the national finances should be maintained. . . .

Prussia has not the riches of Peru, nor wealthy merchants and banks, nor all the numerous resources possessed by France, Spain, and England. However, by means of industry and thrift, Prussia may succeed in occupying a

worthy place by their side. The most important thing is that carefulness and good order should be observed in both income and expenditure.

In his 'Political Testament' of 1776 Frederick stated his views on financial preparation for war more fully. He wrote:

Since the Seven Years' War Prussia's State revenues have prodigiously increased. . . . The national revenue amounts at present to 21,700,000 thalers. With that sum the whole of the national expenditure is provided and 187,000 soldiers are maintained. After all the necessary expenditure has been provided for, there remains every year a surplus balance of 5,700,000 thalers. Of that sum 2,000,000 thalers are deposited every year in the Treasury, while the remaining 3,700,000 thalers are spent on fortifications, on land improvements, on compensation for disasters, &c. These 5,700,000 thalers are used in war time for paying the war expenditure, which comes to 11,000,000 thalers per annum. Hence, 5,300,000 thalers are required as extraordinary expenditure for every year of war.

That sum may be drawn from the Treasury, which contains at present 19,300,000 thalers. Besides that sum Prussia has another War Fund of 4,500,000 thalers, the so-called Small War Fund, from which the cost of mobilisation will be defrayed. In addition, there exists a War Fund of 4,200,000 thalers at Breslau for purchasing forage for an army of 60,000 men, and there is a Fund of 900,000 thalers in the Bank at Magdeburg with which forage for six weeks can be bought.

Besides, the War Chest should contain 11,000,000 thalers for paying the regiments in advance in war time. Of that sum 4,000,000 thalers are there, and the remaining 7,000,000 will be added within three years. It should be noted that if the whole war expenditure is to come out of the war treasure, the money in hand suffices only for a campaign of four years. Hence Prussia must act with the greatest circumspection and economy so as to have money in hand at the time when peace comes again in sight.

It will be noticed that in 1776, thirteen years after the ruinous Seven Years' War, Frederick the Great had accumulated financial resources sufficient to pay for a war lasting four years. Yet he deplored that the money in hand sufficed 'only for a four years' campaign.' Foresight in financial affairs, the necessity of the most ample financial preparation for war, was taught by Frederick the Great, and subsequent rulers have acted in accordance with his teachings.

Frederick the Great attached the highest value to well-ordered finances, to the possession of large funds which might be used in time of national emergency. Hence he valued a good system of taxation which would inconvenience the citizens as little as possible and which would be strictly just. In his 'Essai sur les Formes de Gouvernement' we read:

Foreign policy cannot prosper, and the army cannot be strong, unless the national finances are in perfect order, and unless the ruler himself is economical and prudent. Money is like a sorcerer's wand. Miracles may be performed with it. Great political undertakings, the maintenance of an army, and a wise social policy require money.

No Government can exist without taxation. The great art of raising taxes consists in doing it without oppressing the citizens. To ensure that taxation should be fair, careful Government surveys and valuations of land are made. These are carefully classified, and thus taxation is imposed in accordance with the capacity of the individuals. It would be unpardonable if through a clumsy taxation the tillers of the soil should be made to abandon the land. Having acquired their property, they ought to be able to live on it with their families in comfort.

Frederick the Great provided in peace not only all the money required for a protracted war, but the food as well. He wrote in his 'Political Testament' of 1776:

We have in Berlin a magazine of corn of 36,000 wispels,

sufficient to feed an army of 60,000 men during a whole year. There is an equally large magazine in Silesia for another 60,000 men. Besides there is a fund of 2,000,000 thalers reserved for purchasing grain in Poland. That sum can furnish 120,000 wispels. Thus Prussia is protected against the possibility of famine in time of peace, and in time of war she has sufficient corn in hand for a campaign of three years.

Those who, at the beginning of the war, believed that Germany could be starved into surrender were not acquainted with the providence of the German Government, and with the food policy which Frederick William the First and Frederick the Great had introduced, and which is still pursued by the Prusso-German Government. That Government not unnaturally follows the tradition created by the greatest Prussian rulers.

Frederick William the First had, as we have seen, created in the General Directorate a Supreme Administrative Authority, in which all the Departments of State were co-ordinated so that all should work in harmony and unison instead of hampering and obstructing one another as they had done hitherto. That co-ordination was still further developed by Frederick the Great, who thought it indispensable for the efficiency of the national administration that all the great departments of Prussia should work like a single body. He wrote in his ' Political Testament ' of 1752 :

All the branches of government should be closely interconnected. The management of the national finances, the national policy, and the army are inseparable. It does not suffice that one of these branches is well managed. All three must be efficiently conducted and must advance in the same direction, like a well-trained team, pulling the car of State.

In his ' Political Testament ' of 1776 Frederick once more exhorted his successors :

Foreign policy, the army, and the finances are the three great branches of statesmanship, and they are so closely interwoven that they cannot be separated. All three must be cultivated simultaneously. If all three are promoted simultaneously in accordance with the rules of sound policy the State will reap the greatest advantage. . . . In France there is no real union among these three branches. They do not co-operate. Each Minister is occupied only with the care of his own department. If a similar state of affairs should arise in Prussia the State would be lost.

In the following extract from his 'Essai sur les Formes de Gouvernement' of 1777, Frederick the Great seems almost to describe Cabinet government on a democratic basis, such as exists in England, where men govern without system and without a plan, and where government naturally and inevitably results in waste, confusion, muddle, and inefficiency, if not in disaster. The King wrote:

If a ruler abandons the helm of the ship of State and places it into the hands of paid men, of the Ministers appointed by him, one will steer to the right and another to the left. A general plan is no longer followed.

Every Minister disapproves of the actions of his predecessor, and makes changes even if they are quite unnecessary, wishing to originate a new policy which often is harmful. He is succeeded by Ministers who also hasten to overthrow the existing institutions in order to show their ability. In consequence of the numerous innovations made none can take root. Confusion, disorder, and all the other vices of a bad administration arise, and incapable or worthless officials blame the multitude of changes for their shortcomings.

Men are attached to their own. As the State does not belong to the Ministers in power they have no real interest in its welfare. Hence the government is carried on with careless indifference, and the result is that the administration, the public finances, and the army deteriorate. Thus the monarchy becomes an oligarchy. Ministers and generals direct affairs in accordance with their fancy. Systematic

administration disappears. Everyone follows his own notions. No link is left which connects the directing factors.

As all the wheels and springs of the watch serve together the single object of measuring time, all the springs and wheels of a Government should be so arranged and co-ordinated that all the departments of the national administration work together with the single aim of promoting the greatest good of the State. That aim should not be lost sight of for a single moment. Besides, the individual interests of ministers and generals usually cause them to oppose each other. Thus personal differences often prevent the carrying through of the most necessary measure.

These wise words of Frederick the Great should be placed in golden letters in all the public offices, and be learned by heart by every school child.

In modern times Great Britain has experienced the efficiency of one-man rule in the time of Cromwell and of the elder Pitt. Under these two men the British Government worked like a single body, animated by a single will, with the most gratifying success. A Prime Minister can preserve the unity in the Cabinet, and the unity of governmental action, only if he possesses the supreme direction of all departments, if Cabinet Ministers are not his equals, but his subordinates, if the curious fiction of joint responsibility of the Cabinet is abandoned, if the Prime Minister alone is responsible. A Prime Minister cannot unify the great departments and services by acting merely the part of an amiable chairman at a suburban temperance meeting.

Unfortunately, Democracy, after having destroyed the power of the King, has gradually undermined that of the Ministers as well. Thus the nation is left without a guide. It has become a gigantic business with a large body of squabbling amateur directors, but without a general manager. No one is there to command. Amateurs, men without knowledge, without practical experience, without authority, without power, without initiative, nominally

govern the country, but in reality they merely occupy office, pose as administrators, and allow things to drift. And what is worst, they have suppressed the expert. Amateur politicians have muzzled the military and naval experts, and the ' sovereign ' nation is not allowed to know the truth.

The Ministers in power practise on the nation the confidence trick on a gigantic scale. They attribute all the achievements of the experts to themselves, but make the experts scapegoats for their mistakes. Custom, tradition, the system is to blame for this state of affairs rather than the men who occupy ministerial positions. That practice prevails not only in England, but in all democracies, Switzerland alone excepted. France was almost as unprepared for war as was Great Britain, owing to the inefficiency of her political system.

Germany owes her efficiency not to the greater ability of the Germans themselves, but to the political system which Frederick William the First and Frederick the Great have created, to the fact that a single will animates the whole administration of the State, that the whole nation acts like a single man, and every other consideration is subordinated to the national interest, while in democracies parties and people are squabbling, and the Departments of State are aimlessly pulling some in one direction and some in another.

Administrative efficiency requires not only a good system but also good men. Frederick the Great knew no favourites. In his own words, ' Nature has not distributed talents according to rank and lineage.' Frederick, like Napoleon, gave rank and position only to merit. For obtaining good public servants and increasing their zeal, he attached the greatest value to two factors—to rewards and to punishments. He wrote in his ' Political Testament ' of 1752 :

Men are ruled by two motives : by the fear of punishment and the hope of reward. . . .

A ruler should search for unknown merit and reward men for worthy deeds performed in secret. He should always pay attention to this and keep agents everywhere so as to be informed of meritorious deeds. He should watch for good actions as carefully as tyrants do for conspiracies.

In his 'Political Testament' of 1776 we read:

It is particularly necessary for the preservation of morals that distinctions should be bestowed only for merit and not for wealth. That principle has been disregarded in France, and the consequence has been that public morals have declined. Formerly Frenchmen could obtain honours only by worthy deeds, but now they believe that wealth alone suffices to bring them honours.

In his 'Essai sur les Formes de Gouvernement' of 1777 he stated:

The promotion of morality in the widest sense is one of the most important duties of the sovereign. He can do much by distinguishing and rewarding the worthy and by showing his contempt for the worthless. A ruler should loudly disapprove of every dishonourable act and refuse distinction to those who will not mend their ways.

A sovereign may do irremediable injury to the State by distinguishing people of wealth but without merit, for honours bestowed on the worthless rich strengthen the widely held idea that wealth alone suffices to give distinction. If that belief should gain ground, greed and cupidity will break all bounds. A scramble for wealth will ensue, and the most reprehensible means for acquiring riches will be employed. Corruption will spread apace, become general, and take deep root. Men of talent and of character will be disregarded, and the people will honour only those who by ostentatious expenditure advertise their wealth.

To prevent the corruption of the national character the sovereign must distinguish only men of true merit and treat with contempt men of wealth without virtue.

The way in which Frederick practised what he preached may be seen by the methods by which he forced the nobility to act worthily towards their country. In the Prussian Code, compiled under the inspiration of Frederick the Great, we read in the chapter on the nobility :

Men of nobility are particularly entitled to honourable employment in the service of the State according to their abilities. . . .

Loss of nobility is the consequence if a person of noble birth leads a dishonourable life, or a life by which he lowers himself to the level of the common people.

For committing a common crime people of noble birth may be deprived of their nobility by judicial decision.

Unfortunately, England has been corrupted by politicians who have bestowed rewards on the worthless and neglected and discouraged the deserving. Distinctions and honours are rarely given for services rendered to the nation. Hence the saying, 'Patriotism does not pay,' is generally heard. Titles and honours are frequently bestowed by party men upon other party men. They are sold for cash or are given for party services, and often for unavowable ones, to people who sometimes have done the greatest injury to the State and nation by preying upon the people, drugging them with patent medicines, plying them with bad drink, or deceiving them in the interest of the governing party. On the other hand, patriots who have laboured all their life for their country die in poverty and obscurity. Thus intrigue is rewarded and patriotism discouraged.

People who have travelled in Germany have been surprised by the efficiency of the Government services, by the punctuality of the trains, by the cheapness and promptness of justice, the excellence of the post and telephone, the efficiency of national education, the conscientiousness and the honesty of all officials, and the absence of muddle, delay, and waste. The excellence of the German officials

is due to their training. Frederick the Great considerably increased the efficiency of the wonderful civil service which his father had created by applying to it his principle of rewards and punishments, and by appropriate laws such as the following. They form part of the Prussian code, which breathes in every chapter the Frederician spirit. We read:

Nobody may be given official employment unless he is sufficiently qualified for his post and has given proof of his ability to fill it.

He who by bribery or by other improper means has obtained official employment must immediately be dismissed.

All agreements and promises by which private advantages are promised for obtaining official employment are null and void.

He who knowingly entrusts an official position to an unfit person must make good the damage which may arise to the State or to private individuals through the ignorance or the incompetence of the person appointed.

Officials in authority who have neglected to prevent mistakes and misdemeanours on the part of their subordinates which they might have prevented by acting in accordance with the official regulations are liable for the damage which their neglect has caused to the State and to private citizens.

These laws and their watchful observance have naturally increased greatly the efficiency of the Prussian bureaucracy.

Before the advent of Frederick the Great, important positions in the State were given rather according to favour than according to merit. Frederick abolished this abuse. He was determined to give official positions only to men of ability, regardless of their birth and descent. He wrote in his 'Histoire de mon Temps': 'Nature has distributed gifts amongst men without considering their ancestors.' He anticipated Napoleon's principle, 'La carrière ouverte aux talents.'

Frederick believed that the strength of a State consists

not in its wealth, but in its power—that men are more important than commodities. He attached particular value to agriculture, recognising that the peasantry would supply him with excellent soldiers, and that the development of the national agriculture would enable the soil to nourish a very large population. The King wrote in his 'Anti-Machievel':

The strength of the State consists not in the extent of its territory, not in the possession of a large solitude, but in the wealth and in the number of inhabitants. Therefore it is to the interest of a prince to people his country and to make the inhabitants prosperous.

In his 'Essai sur les Formes de Gouvernement' we read:

The agriculturists are truly the bread-winners of the State. They should be encouraged to cultivate the land carefully, for the true wealth of the country consists in the productivity of the soil. It is true that Holland flourishes, although she produces scarcely one-hundredth of the food consumed by the people. However, Holland is a small State, where commerce has replaced agriculture. It is clear that the greater the territory of the State is, the more necessary is it to promote its rural industries. . . .

The King stated in his 'Political Testament':

War is a bottomless pit, which swallows up men. Therefore attention must be paid to people the country as much as possible. Consequently it is necessary that the land should be well cultivated and that the cultivators should be prosperous.

In Frederick's 'Essai sur les Formes de Gouvernement' we read:

Steps must be taken to provide at all times an abundance of food for the people. To do this the first requirement is to have the soil carefully cultivated, to drain all the wet land which can be drained, and to increase the number of cattle

and thereby increase also the production of milk, butter, cheese, and manure. Besides, an exact account must be made of the quantity of grain of every kind produced in good, medium, and bad years. When allowance is made for the quantity of grain consumed, we know how much surplus there is for exportation in good years, or how much shortage there is likely to be in bad ones.

Every provident sovereign should establish magazines to protect the people against scarcity and famine. In the bad years 1771–1772, Saxony and the provinces of the Empire suffered terribly because they had neglected that precaution. The people were forced to eat the bark of trees. Entire districts became depopulated. Thousands of people. pale and emaciated, like spectres, left the country in order to find sustenance abroad. How their rulers must have reproached themselves when they saw the calamities which they had caused !

Frederick the Great, like the Great Elector and Frederick William the First, strove to enrich the people by wise governmental action. He settled large numbers of immigrants in his thinly peopled provinces, and promoted the national industries by protection and by importing skilled workers from abroad who created new industries in Prussia. According to his Minister Hertzberg, Frederick founded more than 1200 villages, and in 1786, the year of his death, between one-fifth and one-sixth of the inhabitants of Prussia, or more than a million, were immigrants, or descendants of immigrants. During Frederick's rule about 350,000 foreigners were induced to settle in Prussia. In 1785 Prussia had 165,000 industrial workers who produced manufactures to the value of 30,000,000 thalers per year, an enormous sum at the time.

The productivity of Prussia's agriculture was stimulated by wise laws. The code drafted in Frederick's lifetime laid down :

Every agriculturist is obliged to cultivate his property

thoroughly and economically for his own good and for that of the community in general. Therefore he may be forced by the State to cultivate his land adequately, and if he nevertheless continues to neglect it he may be compelled to cede it to others.

No peasant is permitted to sell crops before they are gathered.

The number of peasant holdings must not be diminished, either by incorporating them in landed estates or by combining several of them in one hand. On the contrary, landed proprietors are obliged to see that the holdings in their villages are duly occupied. Peasants' properties where teams are kept must not be converted into holdings where no teams are kept except by special permission of the State.

Desiring to increase the strength of Prussia, Frederick the Great was as much interested in matters economic as in war. As soon as a war was ended, the King endeavoured to repair its ravages and to increase the wealth of the people as much as possible. Immediately after the end of the first and second Silesian wars, Frederick concentrated all his energy upon raising the economic strength of the nation. In the first chapter of his 'Guerre de Sept Ans,' the King tells us :

Although the late King Frederick William I had taken care to bring order into the finances of Prussia, he had not been able to do everything that was needed. He had neither the time nor the means to accomplish so great a work, and the things which had to be done were numerous. Waste lands had to be cleared and cultivated, factories to be established, commerce to be extended, and industry to be encouraged.

As the first years of the King's reign were devoted to war, he could turn his attention to internal affairs only after the establishment of peace. Along the River Oder there were vast swamps, which had probably been uncultivated since the beginning of time. Plans were made for draining

the country. This was done by a canal from Küstrin to Wrietzen, and 2000 families were established on the reclaimed land. Farther on, about Stettin, 1200 families were planted. Thus a small province was conquered by industry from ignorance and sloth. The manufacture of woollens was hampered by the lack of weavers. These were imported from abroad, and a number of weaving villages, comprising two hundred families each, were created.

In the district of Magdeburg it had been a custom since time immemorial that foreigners should come in for the harvest and return to their homes when it had been gathered. King Frederick permanently established these immigrants about Magdeburg, and thus settled a large number of strangers on the land. Through the various measures taken, two hundred and eighty new villages were created; but the towns were not neglected. The King built a new town on the river Swine near the mouth of the Oder. It was called Swinemünde.

Everywhere new industries were called into being. In Berlin the manufacture of rich stuffs and velvets was established. Factories producing light velvets and mixed stuffs were erected at Potsdam. A sugar refinery was established in Berlin. A factory for making curtain stuffs was made to enrich the town of Brandenburg. At Frankfort-on-the-Oder the making of Russian leather was introduced, and in Berlin, Magdeburg, and Potsdam was introduced the manufacturing of silk stockings and silk handkerchiefs. The planting of mulberry trees was established all over Germany. The clergy were made to serve as leaders to the cultivators, and they taught them how to raise silkworms. In out-of-the-way places where wood was superabundant but unsaleable through lack of rivers ironworks were established which furnished the army with guns and shells. About Minden and in the Mark, saltworks were created and those at Halle were improved. In a word, industry was encouraged in the capital and in the provinces. The Emden Trading Company established an important branch in China. By reducing the export duties of the

harbours of Stettin, Königsberg, and Kolberg, the customs receipts were doubled.

Through all these enterprises the revenues of the Crown, excluding those of Silesia and East Frisia, were increased in 1756 by 1,200,000 thalers although the King had not introduced any additional imposts whatever. A census showed that the number of the inhabitants amounted to 5,000,000. As it is certain that the wealth of the State consists in the number of their inhabitants, Prussia could consider herself to be twice as powerful as she had been during the last years of the reign of Frederick William I, the father of King Frederick.

The national finances and the administration of justice did not monopolise the king's attention. The army, that powerful instrument for the glory and preservation of States, was not neglected. Eighty pieces of heavy artillery were cast, and twenty mortars. The store of gunpowder which had been accumulated amounted to 56,000 quintals. In the magazines there were 36,000 wispels of oats. Thus everything was prepared for a war which was to be foreseen. . . . The ants gather in summer the food they consume during the winter, and a ruler must save in time of peace the funds which he has got to spend in time of war.

Prussia had been devastated by the Seven Years' War, which ended in 1763. It had largely been fought on Prussian territory. The condition of the country resembled its condition after the Thirty Years' War. Frederick has told us in his 'Memoires depuis la Paix de Hubertusbourg':

Prussia's population had diminished by 500,000 during the Seven Years' War. On a population of 4,500,000 that decrease was considerable. The nobility and the peasants had been pillaged and ransomed by so many armies that they had nothing left except the miserable rags which covered their nudity. They had not credit enough to satisfy their daily needs. The towns possessed no longer a police. The spirit of fairness and order had been replaced by anarchism and self-interest. The judges and the revenue

authorities had given up their work owing to the frequency of invasions. In the absence of laws, a spirit of recklessness and of rapacity arose. The nobility and the merchants, the farmers, the working-men, and the manufacturers had raised the price of their labour and productions to the utmost. All seemed intent upon ruining each other by their exactions. That was the terrible spectacle which the formerly so flourishing provinces of Prussia offered after the conclusion of the war. The appearance of the provinces resembled that of Brandenburg after the end of the Thirty Years' War.

However, Prussia rapidly recovered owing to the King's wise and energetic policy. Referring to himself in the third person, as he habitually did in his writings, he stated in his 'Mémoires depuis la Paix':

There is no way to increase the wealth of a country except by increasing its manufacturing industries. That is clear and evident. Hence the King, after the peace, concentrated all his energy upon this object. Within ten years, by 1773, 264 new factories had been established in the Prussian provinces. Among them was the porcelain factory in Berlin which gave work to 500 people, and its produce soon exceeded in quality the famous Saxon china. A tobacco factory with branches in all the provinces was created, and it developed an export trade in manufactured goods.

The war had disastrously influenced the Prussian Exchange, and had thus harmed Prussia's foreign commerce. Immediately after the peace the inferior coinage was withdrawn and the exchange was improved by a State Bank founded with this object in view. It had a capital of 800,000 thalers, which was found by the King. It had at first some bad experiences, but later on proved a great success.

Sovereigns, like private people, must make economies so as to have money when it is wanted. Wise agriculturists regulate watercourses and use them for increasing the fertility of the soil. Acting on the same principle, the Prussian Government increased its revenue and used the surplus for promoting the public good. It not only restored what the war had destroyed, but improved all that could be

improved. It drained swamps, improved the land, increased the number of animals in the country, and utilised the sandy soil for afforestation.

The draining of the swamps along the rivers Netze and Warthe cost 750,000 thalers, and 3500 families were settled on the land thus regained to agriculture. The work was finished in 1773, and 15,000 people were settled where formerly had been a wilderness. The marshes about Friedberg were similarly treated and 400 foreign families were settled there. In Pomerania similar works were undertaken. In Brandenburg the marshes of the Havel, of the Rhine, and many others were drained. About Magdeburg 2000 new families were planted. Since the death of his father, Frederick William the First, the King had settled 13,000 new families.

Silesia was not neglected. The ravages which the war had inflicted were made good and improvements begun. The rich abbeys were compelled to establish manufacturing industries, and soon linen, copper, and iron industries, tanneries, and oil mills arose, and 4000 new families were planted in the agricultural district of Lower Silesia.

Large landowners had incorporated numerous peasant properties in their land. Recognising that the possession of property attaches the citizens to their country, and that they can care little for a State where they have nothing to lose, the landowners were compelled to re-establish the peasants. In compensation the King helped them and improved their credit by means of loan banks. Also he took pleasure in spending 300,000 thalers in repaying some of their most pressing debts.

All these expenses were necessary. Money had to be lavishly spent in the provinces to accelerate their recovery, which otherwise would have required a century. By acting generously and lavishly prosperity quickly returned, and 100,000 people who had fled from the war-stricken country returned.

In 1773 the population was by 200,000 larger than it was in 1756, when the Seven Years' War began. In Upper Silesia 213 new villages were created. They had 23,000 in-

habitants, and plans were made for increasing the Pomeranian agriculturists by 50,000 and those of the Mark by 12,000. That project was carried out toward 1780. Between the years 1740, when King Frederick came to the throne, and 1779 the population of the provinces increased as follows: That of Prussia from 370,000 to 780,000; that of the Mark from 480,000 to 710,000; that of Magdeburg and Halberstadt from 220,000 to 280,000; that of Silesia from 1,100,000 to 1,520,000.

Although enormous sums were spent on improving the country, vast amounts were devoted to military purposes as well. On the other hand, King Frederick did not indulge in ostentatious expenditure, usually found at Courts, but lived like a private man. With rigid economy the Treasuries were filled.

In 1770 all Northern Europe was stricken by famine. The infliction required vigorous action. The poor received gifts of corn. The King had accumulated large magazines in all parts of the country. He had 76,000 wispels of grain, enough to feed the army during a whole year, and 9000 wispels for the capital alone. His providence protected the people from starvation. The army was fed from the magazines, and the people were given grain for food and seed. Next year the harvest was bad again, and the neighbour States suffered much more than Prussia because they had neglected establishing magazines in time of abundance.

While barley cost two thalers per measure in Prussia, it cost five thalers in Saxony and Bohemia. Saxony lost more than 100,000 inhabitants through starvation and flight, and Bohemia at least 180,000. On the other hand, more than 20,000 Bohemian peasants and as many from Saxony fled to Prussia, where they were welcomed, and they were made to people the territories which had been reclaimed to agriculture.

In economic matters, as in matters concerning the national defence, the public administration, and the national finances, Frederick the Great acted with foresight and providence, and his successors continued his policy. He wrote prophetically in his 'Mémoires depuis la Paix':

A wise economic policy constantly improved upon from father to son can change the character of the State and convert it from a poor into a wealthy country. A wise economic policy can make a State so wealthy that it can exercise in Europe as great an influence as any one of the leading States.

By pursuing the wise fostering policy which Frederick the Great had initiated, the Hohenzollerns have indeed converted poor agricultural Prussia into a wealthy Great Power, possessed of highly developed industries and a vast international trade.

During the last four decades, while British agriculture has utterly declined and decayed, Germany's agricultural production has fully doubled in weight, and has more than doubled in value. Hence, Germany is agriculturally almost self-supporting. On a territory which is only 75 per cent. larger than that of the United Kingdom, Germany grows bread-corn for 45,000,000 people, while the United Kingdom grows bread-corn only for 5,000,000. Besides, Germany produces, on her 75 per cent. larger area, three times as much meat, about nine times as much potatoes, and twenty times as much timber as the United Kingdom, and enormous quantities of sugar and tobacco, of which none are produced in this country, although it is suitable for their production. Hence food is far cheaper in blockaded Germany than in Great Britain.

The wise policy of encouragement initiated by Frederick William the First and Frederick the Great, and reintroduced by Bismarck, has not only enormously increased Germany's agricultural production and rural wealth, but has had a still more marvellous effect upon her manufacturing industries. During the last thirty-five years the engine power of Prussia has increased more than seven-fold. While the British manufacturing industries as a whole, comparatively speaking, have remained stagnant, the German manufacturing industries have marvellously in-

creased, and her formerly insignificant iron and steel industry is now far greater than that of this country.

In the manufacturing industries, as in commerce, Germany has successfully challenged the formerly unchallengeable supremacy of this country. The policy of action, of wise governmentalism, has triumphed in agriculture, in industry and in commerce over that of *laissez-faire* and non-interference. Unfortunately, those who during the last two decades have unceasingly pointed out the danger of allowing Great Britain's agriculture to decay and her manufacturing industries to decline and to be outstripped by German competition, as the writer of this book has frequently done in the pages of *The Nineteenth Century*, *The Fortnightly Review*, and elsewhere, preached to ears deliberately deaf. The politicians in power did not ask whether the national safety was endangered by allowing the manufacturing industries, and even the iron and steel industry, which provides weapons for war, to stagnate or to decline, or whether the decay of agriculture would do irremediable harm to this country and perhaps cripple it in the hour of peril; they simply asked whether Protection was politically a 'profitable' policy, whether it would gain or lose votes, and, believing that it was an unpopular policy, that it might lose votes, the politicians in power preached Free Trade.

Those who are acquainted with the causes of Germany's efficiency and success must look towards the future with concern. Germany makes war cheaply but efficiently. Great Britain makes war wastefully. She has spent colossal amounts with lamentably inadequate results. In view of the comparatively small war expenditure of Germany and the enormous expenditure of Great Britain, and in view of the wonderful revival which the Prussian industries have experienced after the greatest national disasters, even after 1763 and 1806, in consequence of the energetic action of her Government, and of nation-

wide co-operation, Germany may conceivably be able to bear the costs of the present war better than Great Britain, and Great Britain may emerge from the war more crippled than Germany. Unpreparedness and muddle are very expensive luxuries in war, in administration, and in matters economic as well.

A hundred and fifty years ago Prussia was a land peopled by boors. Now it is a land peopled by professors, scientists, and artists. Frederick the Great was the first Prussian monarch to realise that science and art increase the strength and prestige of nations. Hence, he began cultivating the sciences and arts, and his successors followed his example. As science and art were found to be sources of national power, they were as thoroughly promoted as was the army itself, while in this country education remained amateurish. Men toyed with science, and the universities rather taught manners than efficiency.

Frederick the Great vastly improved the Prussian law. He desired that people should be able to obtain, not law, but justice speedily and cheaply. With this end in view he caused legal procedure to be shortened by wise regulations, and, in order to simplify the law, he had it codified. Herein lies the reason that justice may be obtained quickly and cheaply in Germany, and that the laws are simple and plain; whereas in this country the laws are a maze, and justice is sometimes unobtainable because of the intricacies of the law, its uncertainty, and its ruinous cost.

The details given in these pages show clearly that Germany's strength, wealth, and efficiency are due to the governmental system of the country. Germany's power has been created by her most eminent rulers, the Great Elector, King Frederick William the First, and Frederick the Great. They abolished self-government of every form, and made the whole nation a gigantic machine for carrying out the sovereign's will in war and in peace. Individually, the Germans are very ordinary men. Collectively

they have been amazingly successful because the whole power of the nation is organised, and can be employed against other nations in peace and war by an absolute sovereign. The secret of Germany's strength, wealth efficiency, may be summed up in a single word: Discipline. Apparently Germany is a constitutionally governed State possessing a Parliament, manhood franchise, &c. In reality Germany is more absolutely governed than ever before, for with the introduction of universal military service resistance on the part of the people has become impossible.

At first sight it may seem that it is hopeless for a democracy to compete with a highly organised monarchy such as Germany, that Great Britain is now suffering for the execution of Charles the First, that in the conflict between absolutism and democracy, democracy is bound to be defeated, that democracy is doomed. The conclusion is scarcely justified. A democracy may be efficient, business-like, provident, and ready for war. That can be seen by the example of Switzerland. It would be more correct to say that a Government which governs is likely to defeat, in peace and in war, a Government which drifts.

Nations are made by their leaders. Unfortunately the characteristic of British democracy is self-indulgence, while the characteristic of the German people, and of the Swiss people, too, is duty, patriotism, and work. British politicians have pursued the policy of pander which German statesmen and Swiss politicians have wisely disdained. The advocates of democracy, and especially of British democracy, may point to the successes of the English race in every clime, and to the fact that it owns one half of the habitable globe; the English race, however, has expanded so successfully, not because of democratic government, but in spite of it. It has flourished so greatly because of its capacity for colonising, because it was first in the field, because it was favoured by chance, because the great nations were fighting among themselves while Englishmen were conquering the

globe, because it never had to fight an organised absolutism such as the German.

Will the British and American democracy hold its own against Germany, or will it go under? That is the question which the war will settle.

It is too late to discuss principles of government when existence is at stake. The problem is to defend the liberty of Great Britain, of the British Empire, of the Anglo-Saxon race, and of its Allies in the life and death struggle in which they are engaged. The resources of the British Empire and of its Allies are boundless. They dispose of 700,000,000 men as compared with only 150,000,000 Germans, Austrians, Bulgarians, and Turks. The German combination has no chance against the Entente Powers if the gigantic resources of the British Empire are at last organised for war.

Analysis of Germany's organisation shows that nation-wide and Empire-wide organisation cannot be effected by voluntary methods, by persuasion, and by entreaty. By persuasion one can organise a team of athletes, not an Empire. Effort is merely wasted if those who ought to work in the factory fight, and those who ought to fight continue working, or idling. Organisation must be met by organisation, absolutism by absolutism. The nation and Empire want real leading, a system which can compel those who ought to fight to join the army, and those who ought to work to labour to the best of their ability. It seems that only a system conferring absolute power for the duration of the war can organise the forces of the United Kingdom and of the Empire as a whole.

Democracy is on its trial. The Anglo-Saxon race is fighting for its existence. There is danger in delay. War is a one-man business. Every other consideration should be subordinated to that of achieving victory. When the United States fought for their life, they made President Lincoln virtually a Dictator. The freest and most unruly

democracy allowed Habeas Corpus to be suspended and conscription to be introduced, to save itself. Great emergencies call for great measures. The war demands great sacrifices in every direction. However, if it leads to England's modernisation, to the elimination of the weaknesses and vices of Anglo-Saxon democracy, if it leads to the unification and organisation of the Empire, the purification of its institutions, and the recreation of the race, the gain may be greater than the loss, the colossal cost of the war notwithstanding. The British Empire and the United States, the Anglo-Saxon race in both hemispheres, have apparently arrived at the turning-point in their history.

CHAPTER II

THE FOUNDATIONS OF GERMANY'S DIPLOMACY [1]

Many British historians, statesmen, and publicists have endeavoured to explain to us the hidden causes of the present war. They have dwelt on the warlike and bombastic utterances which William the Second has made ever since he came to the throne, and have traced the conflagration to two powerful influences: to the boundless ambition and conceit of the German Emperor and to the support which he received by the teachings of German jingoes of the military and of the professorial variety, from Treitschke to Bernhardi. They have compared the Emperor to Bismarck, Louis the Fourteenth, and Napoleon the First. However, nothing is easier than to establish superficial but entirely misleading historical parallels.

Unfortunately, the British Universities, while devoting much time to abstract economic theory, miscalled political economy, and to the dust and dry bones of history, have completely neglected statesmanship, that most important of all sciences, in its practical and historical aspects. Before the war mediæval Germany was assiduously studied by the professors, but modern Germany was disregarded and was scarcely known. Militarily and intellectually Great Britain was equally unprepared for Germany's attack, and those who unceasingly tried to warn the nation, as the writer of these pages has done in *The Nineteenth*

[1] From *The Nineteenth Century and After*, June 1915.

Century, The Fortnightly Review, and elsewhere during fifteen years, were treated as alarmists, cranks, and anti-Germans.

After the outbreak of the war, British soldiers and statesmen hastily began to organise a national army, and British professors endeavoured to explain to the public modern German history and German statesmanship, two subjects with which they are deplorably ill acquainted. When it was too late, scraps from the political writings of Treitschke and his disciples were published in translation for the information of the public, and now everyone who has read some extracts from Treitschke and Bernhardi believes that he fully understands Germany's character and policy.

The rash policy of William the Second in no way resembles that of Prince Bismarck, nor is it comparable with that of Louis the Fourteenth and Napoleon the First. In another part of this book I shall show that William the Second, soon after his advent, threw Bismarck's policy and teaching to the winds, and that the Iron Chancellor spent the last eight years of his life in strenuous opposition to the Emperor's reckless policy, and foretold that it would lead to Germany's ruin. William the Second has certainly not acted in accordance with Bismarck's views and methods. His world-embracing ambitions may resemble those of Napoleon the First, and his attitude and his absolutist pronouncements no doubt remind us of Louis the Fourteenth's celebrated *L'état c'est moi.* He has not, however, taken Frenchmen for his model, but one of his predecessors, Frederick the Great.

The Emperor bears in many respects a most remarkable resemblance to his great ancestor. Modern German statesmanship is not Bismarckian but Frederickian. Treitschke and Bernhardi are not innovators, but imitators. They are merely expounders of the methods of Frederick the Great. A study of Frederick's policy is not only interesting

at the moment, but it should prove of very considerable practical value to the statesmen of the nations allied against Germany. Such a study will reveal to us the hidden causes of the war and of Germany's conduct before and during the struggle, and it will give us an excellent insight into the traditional methods of Prussian statesmanship. It will show us how Prusso-Germany rose from insignificance and poverty to greatness and affluence, and it will at the same time teach us the way by which alone the Entente Powers can bring the war to a successful conclusion.

The British Universities, while publishing at great expense editions and translations of the writings of remote antiquity, which are entirely useless for all practical purposes, have paid no attention to the most important foreign political writings with which every well-educated Englishman ought to be acquainted. For Bismarck's statesmanship those who do not read German have to rely mainly upon his badly translated 'Memoirs,' which contain chiefly personal matters, and upon Busch's chatter; while for that of Frederick the Great they have to turn to the romancings of Carlyle and Macaulay. Frederick the Great's most valuable political writings are as unknown in this country as are Bismarck's. Frederick wielded a most prolific pen. His general writings fill thirty moderate-sized volumes, and his political correspondence, of which so far only part has been published, forty very large ones. He wrote only in French, and the large majority of the extracts from his writings and letters given in the following pages have not previously been published in English.

The Germans are stolid and one-sided people. William the Second strikingly resembles his great ancestor by his un-German vivacity, his restlessness, and his great versatility. The Emperor poses as an authority on all things human and divine, and endeavours not only to direct in person the Army, the Navy, the Church, and all the Departments of State, but all the arts and sciences and the economic activities

of Germany as well. Similarly, Frederick the Great was the Government. He was his own Commander-in-Chief, Minister of War, Chief of the Staff, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Finance, of Commerce, and of Justice, &c. His assistants were mere clerks. In addition he was an excellent economist, historian, and musician. He wrote a good deal of indifferent French poetry and philosophy, and he patronised and endeavoured to direct all the sciences and arts and the entire business of Prussia.

William the Second, like Frederick the Great, is a consummate actor. Frederick the Great posed before the world as a philosopher, a friend of man, and a free-thinker. William the Second poses as a devout and deeply religious man. Both Frederick the Great and William the Second have acted with the greatest hypocrisy, unscrupulousness, and heartless brutality. Both have successfully deceived the world in the early part of their career by their frequently made fervent protestations that they loved peace and public morality, and condemned injustice, tyranny, and war, and both have attacked their unsuspecting and unprepared neighbours after having lulled them to sleep by their pacific and generous utterances.

Before studying the views and policy of Frederick the Great we should cast a glance at his immediate predecessors, for thus we shall be able to follow the progress of Prussia since the time when it became a kingdom.

Frederick's grandfather, the first King of Prussia, who was crowned a king in 1701, was despicable as a man and a monarch. Frederick the Great has drawn a terrible picture of him in his ' Mémoires de Brandebourg,' published in 1751. He wrote :

Frederick the First was attracted by the pomp surrounding royalty. He was actuated by vanity and self-love. He liked to exalt himself above others. His acquisition of the royal crown was caused by a common and childish vanity. In the end it proved a political master-stroke, for the royal

dignity delivered the House of Brandenburg from the yoke of the House of Austria. The crown became a spur and a challenge to his posterity, and he seemed to urge his heirs: 'I have acquired for you a great title. Make yourselves worthy of it. I have laid the foundation of your greatness. It is your duty to accomplish the work which I have begun. . . .'

The armies marching through Prussia, in the time of Frederick the First, had spread disease throughout the country, and famine had increased the effect of the pestilence. The King abandoned his people in their misfortune, and, while his revenues did not suffice for the magnificence of his expenditure on vain pomp, he saw in cold blood more than 200,000 of his subjects perish whose lives he could have saved by timely action. . . .

To obtain the royal crown he sacrificed the lives of 30,000 of his subjects in wars made on behalf of the Emperor. The royal dignity appealed only to his vanity and his love of dissipation. He was open-handed and generous, but bought his pleasures at a terrible cost. He sold his subjects as soldiers to England and Holland like cattle to the butcher.

He wasted the wealth of the nation in prodigal and vain dissipation. His Court was one of the most magnificent in Europe. His favourites received large pensions. Nothing could equal the magnificence of his palaces. His fêtes were superb. His stables were filled with horses, his kitchens with cooks, and his cellars with wine. He gave an estate worth 40,000 thalers to a servant for shooting a large stag. He intended to pawn his domains at Halberstadt in order to buy the Pitt diamond which ultimately was bought by Louis the Fifteenth. . . . His favourites were overwhelmed with gifts; and while his eastern provinces perished through famine and pestilence he did not lift a finger to help them.

Frederick the First died for the good of his country in 1713, and was succeeded by his son, Frederick William the First, the father of Frederick the Great. Frederick William the First reduced the expenditure of the Court to a minimum, introduced the most rigid economy in the

country, and employed the national resources exclusively for creating a large army and a great war chest. He converted Prussia into an armed camp and militarised the whole nation. His character is drawn as follows by Frederick the Great in the 'Histoire de mon Temps':

The late King Frederick William the First strove to make his country happy, to create a well-disciplined army, and to administer his finances with order and wise economy. He avoided war in order not to be diverted from this worthy aim, and thus he advanced his country unostentatiously on the way to greatness without awakening the envy of other States.

In Frederick's essay 'Des Mœurs, des Coutumes, de l'Industrie,' we read:

Under Frederick the First Berlin had been the Athens of the North. Under Frederick William the First it became its Sparta. Its entire government was militarised. The capital became the stronghold of Mars. All the industries which serve the needs of armies prospered. In Berlin were established powder mills and cannon foundries, rifle factories, &c. . . .

Frederick William the First strove less to create new industries than to abolish useless expenditure. Formerly, mourning had been ruinously expensive. Funerals were accompanied by extremely costly festivities. These abuses were abolished. Houses and carriages were no longer allowed to be draped in black, nor were black liveries to be given to servants. Henceforward people died cheaply. The military character of the Government affected both customs and fashions. Society took a military tone. No one used more than three ells of cloth for a coat. The age of gallantry passed away. Ladies fled the society of men, and these compensated themselves with carousals, tobacco, and buffoonery.

Frederick William the First died on May 17, 1740, and was succeeded by his son, Frederick the Second, the Great.

As Frederick loved the French language and French elegance, was devoted to poetry, music, and art, and hated the army, he was despised by his coarse and brutal father. He seemed to him a fop and a degenerate, another Frederick the First. Men in Prussia and abroad who had suffered under the harsh and parsimonious government of Frederick William the First hailed Frederick's advent with joy. They thought that the rule of the martinet had come to an end, that life in Prussia under the new sovereign would be pleasant and peaceful.

Frederick was twenty-eight years old when he came to the throne, and he had done his best to deceive the world as to his real character. He was believed to be witty, genial, and peaceful, if not unmilitary. In 1737, three years before he ascended the throne, he published a book called 'Considérations sur l'état du corps politique de l'Europe,' which concluded with the words: 'It is a disgrace for a ruler to ruin his State; and to attempt to obtain territories to which one has no justified claim must be branded as criminal injustice and rapacity.'

Two years later, in 1739, Frederick the Great wrote his celebrated book 'The Anti-Machiavel.' It was published in 1740, the year when he came to the throne. In it he stated with the greatest emphasis that policy should be based upon morality, and laid down the remarkable doctrine that ruler and subjects were equals, and that the sovereign was the first servant of the State. In the first chapter of the 'Anti-Machiavel' we read: 'A sovereign, far from being the absolute master of the people, should only be the highest official (*le premier magistrat*).' In another edition of the same book that expression was replaced by 'le premier domestique.' In the 'Mémoires de Brandebourg' he stated that a ruler should be 'le premier serviteur de l'Etat.' Frederick the Great, in his 'Anti-Machiavel,' laid down the duties of kingship as follows:

Rulers ought to be exclusively occupied with the duties

of study and of government in order to be able to act with intelligence and in the fullness of knowledge. Their business consists in thinking correctly and in acting in accordance with their intelligence and convictions.

In the 'Anti-Machiavel' Frederick utterly condemned the policy advocated by the great Florentine statesman. He castigated the boundless ambitions of rulers, and urged that the action of sovereigns should be animated by philosophy, by a lofty idealism, by love of mankind, by virtue, and by love of peace. We read in the Preface and in Chapter VI:

While Spinoza undermined the foundations of faith, Machiavelli undermined those of statesmanship. . . . I venture to take up the defence of humanity against that monster which strives to destroy humanity, and would oppose reason and justice to sophistry and crime. . . . Floods which overwhelm the land, the fire of lightning which reduces towns to ashes, and pestilences which depopulate entire provinces are not as terrible to the world as the dangerous morals and the unbridled passions of kings. The celestial inflictions last only for a time. They rage only over a limited space, and Nature makes good the destruction they have caused, but for the crimes of kings entire nations suffer for a very long time. . . .

I would tell the kings that their true political interest consists in outshining their subjects in virtue. I would tell them that it is not enough for them to establish for themselves a great reputation by means of brilliant and glorious actions, but that on their part actions are required which will promote the happiness of the human race.

Of all the sentiments which exercise a tyrannic influence over our minds, none is more fatal, more contrary to humanity, and more pernicious to the peace of the world than unrestrained ambition, an unquenchable desire for false glory.

No terms were strong enough for Frederick with which to brand a conquering prince, who to him was merely a crowned villain. He told the world in his 'Anti-Machiavel':

Heroes and highwaymen possess the same courage and the same skill. The only difference between them is, that a conqueror is an illustrious thief and that a highwayman is an obscure one. The former is rewarded for his deeds with a laurel wreath, and the latter with the rope.

The 'Anti-Machiavel' is a pæan of peace. Peace is described as the greatest blessing and war as the greatest crime. The book significantly ends with the following powerful sentences:

I feel convinced that if monarchs would fully realise the miseries which a declaration of war inflicts upon their peoples I should not appeal in vain to their better feelings. But their imagination is not sufficiently strong. They do not appreciate the evils of war; they do not know them, and they are protected against war's horrors by their exalted position. They do not feel the taxes and imposts which crush the people, the loss of the youth of the nation enrolled in the army, the infectious diseases which decimate the troops, the horrors of battles and sieges, the sufferings of the wounded and of the mutilated, the sorrows of the orphans who have lost in their father their only support, the loss of so many useful men who have been cut off before their time. Sovereigns who see in their subjects merely their slaves will sacrifice them without pity and see them perish without regret, but princes who see in other men their equals and consider themselves as the soul of the body politic, of the people, will carefully preserve the precious blood of their subjects.

As government should be based on virtue and on the love of mankind, it should be carried on with scrupulous honesty, the more so as honesty is not only a virtue but an advantage to those who possess it. Treaties should be observed most religiously and be broken only in case of direst need. We read in the 'Anti-Machiavel':

Both honesty and worldly wisdom demand that sovereigns should religiously observe the treaties which they

have concluded, and that they should scrupulously fulfil all their stipulations. . . .

A ruler is sometimes compelled by disagreeable necessity to break his treaties and alliances. However, he should part with his obligations like an honest man. He should advise his Allies in time of his intention, and he should before all never take such an extreme step unless the welfare of the people and absolute necessity make it inevitable. . . .

Looking solely at the interest of rulers, I assert that it is very bad policy on their part to act like rascals and to deceive the world. They deceive only once, and then lose credit everywhere.

According to the ' Anti-Machiavel,' Frederick's ideal form of government was a limited monarchy on the English model :

It seems to me that if we look for a model among the Governments of the present time we find it in England. In England, Parliament stands between the King and the people. The English King has the greatest power for doing good, but none for doing evil.

The ' Anti-Machiavel ' is not merely an expression of the purest and most praiseworthy sentiments, for it contains at the same time many exceedingly shrewd and practical political observations. Frederick the Great utterly condemned entrusting the forces of the country to ministers or generals, to underlings. In his opinion, the ruler should command the army in person, and should be supported by an able general if he did not possess the necessary military gifts :

A ruler should command his troops in person. His army is his home, his interest, his duty, his glory. Being the defender of justice, he ought to be the defender of his subjects, and as this is one of the most important objects of his office, he ought not to entrust it to anyone else. Besides, his presence with the army abolishes misunderstanding among his generals and differences between them which are

harmful to his interests and to those of the army. His presence creates order in the matter of magazines, ammunition and warlike provisions, without which even a Julius Caesar would be helpless. As the ruler orders battles to be fought, he should also command in battle, and should by his presence increase the courage and confidence of his troops and animate them by his example.

Although Frederick censured in the strongest terms war in the abstract, he very sensibly recognised the necessity of war against oppression and against the overweening ambitions of another nation. He justified only wars of defence, and he laid down the theory of the balance of power in the following sentences :

Sometimes sovereigns are wise in undertaking wars of precaution. Such wars are technically wars of attack. Nevertheless, they are just. When the excessive strength of a State threatens to overflow its boundaries and to engulf the world, wisdom commands us to oppose dykes and to arrest thereby the torrent while it can still be controlled. When we see clouds arise on the horizon and when lightning announces to us the coming storm, the threatened sovereign who cannot weather it alone will, if he is wise, combine with those who are threatened with the same danger, and who have therefore the same interests.

If the kings of Egypt, Syria, and Macedonia had allied themselves in time against the power of Rome, Rome would never have been able to overthrow them. A carefully devised alliance and an energetically conducted war would have prevented Rome from achieving its aims and enslaving the world. It follows that a ruler will act more wisely if he embarks upon a war of aggression while he is still master of his destiny, while he can still choose between war and peace, than if he should sit still and wait until times have become desperate, for then a declaration of war on his part would serve no purpose except to delay his enslavement and ruin for a little while.

It is an excellent maxim that it is better to surprise than

to be surprised in war, and all great men have taken advantage of it.

The 'Anti-Machiavel' was an act of self-revelation on the part of Frederick. At the end of the sixth chapter we read the remarkable words: 'Let Caesar Borgia be the model of those who admire Machiavelli. My model is Marcus Aurelius.'

We have listened to Frederick's profession of faith publicly made in the year 1740, when he came to the throne. His book created an immense sensation throughout Europe, and impressed rulers and peoples with the idea that a mild, generous, and peace-loving Sovereign had ascended the Prussian throne. However, the world was deceived. While Frederick seemed to be devoted to peace, art, beauty, and all the virtues, he was devoured by an insatiable thirst for glory. He was determined to win renown either by fair means or by foul, and was prepared to use the worst methods described by Machiavelli to fulfil his ambitions. He was ready to bring about a war which would cost countless lives, and which might end in the utter destruction of his country and of his dynasty.

The Emperor Charles the Sixth had no son. He desired that his hereditary rights, after his death, should fall to his daughter Maria Theresa, and had endeavoured to guarantee her peaceful succession by treaties with nearly all the Powers, the so-called Pragmatic Sanction, to which Prussia also had adhered. Although Prussia had signed that solemn act which guaranteed Austria's integrity, Frederick resolved to claim under the flimsiest of pretexts from Austria four duchies of Silesia which had been in Austria's undisputed possession ever since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. We shall learn Frederick's motives for attacking Austria partly from his correspondence, partly from his 'Histoire de mon Temps.' The latter is an historical document of the very greatest importance. It is true

its style is occasionally flippant. However, it was written by Frederick for the guidance of the future rulers of Prussia, and is therefore an invaluable supplement to his political and military testaments. Its author told us in the Preface :

I wish to transmit to posterity the principal events in which I have taken a part, or of which I have been witness, for the guidance of those who will rule Prussia after me. Thus they may learn the reasons of my actions, the means which I employed, the enterprises of Prussia's enemies, the course of diplomatic negotiations, &c.

While in his ' Anti-Machiavel ' Frederick described love of peace and morality as the greatest virtues of a ruler, and condemned ambition, love of glory, and love of conquest in unmeasured terms, he revealed his true character in the Preface of the ' Histoire de mon Temps.' There he revealed the fact that love of glory and conquest was after all a virtue and his principal motive. He stated :

The true merit of a good prince consists in being sincerely attached to the public welfare—to love his country and to love glory. I mention glory because that happy instinct which arouses in men a strong desire to acquire a good reputation is the mainspring which incites them to heroic actions. The love of glory is the power which awakens the mind from its lethargy and causes us to embark upon useful, necessary, and praiseworthy enterprises.

The Emperor Charles the Sixth, a naturally strong and healthy man, died suddenly and rather unexpectedly on October 20, 1740, at the early age of fifty-five. Frederick was at the time in the country, at Rheinsberg, and he immediately wrote to Jordan and other friends of his that he would make use of the opportunity and attack Austria in order to acquire glory, that he wished to employ the powerful army which Frederick William the First had created and the war treasure which he had accumulated

by his thrift. On November 1, 1740, Frederick wrote to his principal Minister, von Podewils:

. . . I give you a question to solve. When one has the advantage, should one make use of it or not? I am ready with my troops and with everything else. If I do not use them now I keep in my hands a powerful but useless instrument. If I use my army it will be said that I have had the skill of taking advantage of the superiority which I have over my neighbours.

Frederick made war upon Austria in 1740, not because Prussia had any serious and valid claims to Silesia, but merely because the young King was eager to acquire glory and had a strong and ready army, while Austria was disorganised, was totally unprepared for war, and was likely to prove an easy prey. The Austrian Government had fallen into the hands of a young and inexperienced woman, who lacked good advisers and generals; and other Powers were likely to follow Frederick's example, dispute the Austrian succession, and endeavour to seize part of the Austrian heritage. The King has told us with great candour—or should one call it cynicism?—in his 'Histoire de mon Temps':

After the conclusion of the Turco-Austrian War [in which Austria was badly defeated] the Austrian army was completedly ruined. . . . The larger part of the Austrian troops remained in Hungary, but they numbered only 43,000 combatants. No one thought of reorganising and completing the army. Besides these, the Austrians had only 16,000 men in Italy, at most 12,000 in Flanders, while five or six regiments were distributed in the Hereditary Lands. Instead of being 175,000 men strong, the Austrian effectives did not reach 82,000. . . .

Notwithstanding her disorganisation and hidden weakness, Austria was, in 1740, still reckoned among the most formidable of European Powers. People thought of Austria's vast resources, and believed that a man of genius

might put everything right. Meanwhile, Austria replaced strength with pride, and she sought comfort for her recent humiliation by thinking of her glorious past. . . .

Prussia had a national income of only seven million thalers. The provinces were poor and backward owing to the devastation of the Thirty Years' War, and were unable to furnish adequate resources to the sovereign. Hence the ruler had to rely for financing a war on the economies made in the past. The late King Frederick William the First had accumulated a war treasure. Although it was not very large it sufficed. One could make use of one's opportunities. However, matters had to be managed with prudent care. One had to avoid a long-drawn-out war, and to hasten a decision.

It was most awkward that Prussia had no regular shape. The provinces of the country were small in size, and were spread all about Central Germany from Poland to Brabant. Her geographical position gave Prussia many neighbours more than she would have had if her territory had been rounded off and formed a solid block.

As matters stood, Prussia could go to war only if she was supported either by France or by England. One could march hand in hand with France, for that country thirsted for glory and desired to humble the House of Austria. From the English one could have obtained nothing except subsidies, which they would pay only for the promotion of a policy favourable to British interests, while Russia had as yet not sufficient weight in the balance of European power.

After the death of the Emperor, Austria was in a most difficult position. The national finances were in confusion. The army had fallen to pieces and was disheartened by its failure in the War with the Turks. The Ministers were disunited. At the head of the Government was a young woman without experience [Maria Theresa, who was only twenty-three years old] who had to defend a disputed succession. Hence the Austrian Government did not appear redoubtable.

The King of Prussia was certain that he was able to obtain allies. Frederick's determination to make war upon Austria was confirmed by the death of the Empress Anna of

Russia. Through her demise the Russian crown fell to the youthful Grand Duke Ivan, a son of a Princess of Mecklenburg and of Prince Anton Ulrich of Brunswick, and the latter was Frederick's brother-in-law. To all appearances, Russia would, therefore, during the minority of the young Czar, be more interested in maintaining order in the interior of the Empire than in defending the Pragmatic Sanction in Austria. . . .

Marshal Münnich, who had caused the elevation of the Prince of Brunswick and of his Mecklenburg consort, was the most eminent personage in Russia. He wielded for all practical purposes the sovereign power during the Grand Duke's minority. The Prince of Brunswick was weak and unintelligent. His wife was capricious, and she possessed all the faults of an ill-educated woman. Under the pretext of congratulating the Prince of Brunswick and his wife, the King sent Baron Winterfeld on a mission to Russia. His real reason for sending Winterfeld was to gain over Marshal Münnich, who was Winterfeld's father-in-law. He wished to induce the Field-Marshal to favour the designs which Prussia was on the point of carrying out. The success of Winterfeld's mission was as great as could be desired.

Although every precaution was taken to disguise the intended expedition against Austria, it was impossible to accumulate perishable provisions, to establish magazines, to assemble artillery, and to move large bodies of troops without attracting attention. The public began to suspect that some enterprise was about to be undertaken. The Austrian Ambassador in Berlin, Damrath, advised his Court that a storm was brewing which might sweep over Silesia. The Council in Vienna replied: 'We will not and cannot believe your news.' Nevertheless, the Austrian Court sent the Marquis Botta to Berlin nominally with the mission of congratulating King Frederick on his succession, but really in order to find out whether the Austrian Ambassador was right or whether he had given a false alarm. . . .

Although King Frederick was firmly determined upon his policy, he thought it useful to make an attempt at arriving at an agreement with Vienna. With this object

in view, Count Gotter was dispatched to Vienna. He was to declare to Maria Theresa that King Frederick would assist her against all her enemies if she would cede Silesia to him. As that offer was likely to be rejected, Count Gotter was authorised to declare war on Prussia's behalf. However, the Prussian army travelled more quickly than the Prussian Ambassador. It entered Silesia two days before Count Gotter arrived in Vienna.

Twenty battalions and thirty-six squadrons were directed towards Silesia, and these were followed by six battalions who were to besiege the fortress of Glogau. Although that number was quite small it seemed sufficient to seize an undefended country. . . .

On December 23, 1740, the Prussian army entered Silesia. On their march the troops distributed everywhere proclamations in which were shown the rights which the House of Brandenburg had to Silesia. At the same time manifestoes were distributed in which it was stated that the Prussians took possession of Silesia in order to defend that country against attacks from a third Power. Thus it was hinted with sufficient clearness that Prussia would not abandon Silesia without fighting. At the same time, in consequence of these proclamations, the nobility and people of Silesia did not look upon the Prussians who entered their province as hostile invaders, but considered their arrival as an endeavour on the part of a neighbour and ally to assist in the defence of that province against third parties.

Frederick the Great has told us in his 'Guerre de Sept Ans':

If sovereigns wish to make war they are not restrained by arguments suitable for a public proclamation. They determine the course upon which they wish to embark, make war and leave to some industrious jurist the trouble of justifying their action.

Frederick's intention to attack Austria without cause surprised and scandalised even his best friends. His

intimate friend Jordan wrote to the King from Berlin on December 14, 1740:

Les critiques croient la démarche présente directement opposée aux maximes renfermées dans le dernier chapitre de l'Antimachiavel.

To this the King replied:

Laisse parler les envieux et les ignorants; ce ne seront jamais eux qui serviront de boussole à mes desseins, mais bien la gloire. J'en suis pénétré plus que jamais, mes troupes en ont le cœur enflé, et je reponds du succès.

On November 1, 1740, Frederick had expressed to his Minister, von Podewils, as we have seen, his determination to attack Austria. Five days later, on November 6, he requested Professor von Ludewig, who during forty years had collected material showing Prussia's claims to four Silesian duchies, to send him a memoir for his justification.

Although Frederick had in his 'Anti-Machiavel' recommended honesty and straightforwardness in diplomatic negotiations, he acted with incredible unscrupulousness. Writing on November 15 to his Ambassador in Vienna, he stated that the position in Europe had become so critical, and that the balance of power in Europe, the preservation of the German Empire and German liberty were so much endangered, that he was forced to employ violent remedies. Hence he had resolved to invade Silesia, partly in order to prevent that province being seized by another State, partly in order to be able to support and save Austria from the ruin with which she was threatened. He dwelt on the purity of his motives, and stated that he was ready to guarantee the Austrian possessions against all comers and to conclude an alliance with Austria if that country would cede Silesia to Prussia.

Very naturally, his 'offer' was declined.

Frederick invaded Silesia before Count Gotter, the bearer of his ultimatum, had arrived in Vienna. The province

stood open to the Prussian troops, and was entirely undefended. In order to disarm resistance on the part of the inhabitants, Frederick informed them by a Proclamation, dated December 1, that, as the Emperor had died without leaving an heir male, the Austrian succession had been challenged, that there was a danger that other Powers might seize Silesia, and that he occupied that province with his troops, 'not at all in the intention of insulting Her Majesty, Maria Theresa, but, on the contrary, in order to manifest his friendship with the house of Austria, to promote its true interests, and to contribute to its preservation; that no hostility was to be expected from the Prussian troops, and that he hoped that the inhabitants would act like good neighbours.'

That Proclamation singularly resembles the one addressed to the inhabitants of Belgium at the beginning of the present war.

Wishing to deceive the other European Powers as to his intentions as long as possible, Frederick sent, on December 6, 1740, a declaration to the principal embassies, according to which the invasion of Silesia was not intended to be a hostile attack, for it was worded as follows:

Le Roi, en faisant entrer ses troupes en Silésie, ne s'est porté à cette démarche par aucune mauvaise intention contre la cour de Vienne et moins encore dans celle de vouloir troubler le repos de l'Empire. Sa Majesté s'est cru indispensablement obligé d'avoir sans délai recours à ce moyen pour revendiquer les droits incontestables de sa maison sur ce duché, fondés sur des anciens pactes de famille et de confraternité entre les électeurs de Brandebourg et les princes de Silésie, aussi bien que sur d'autres titres respectables.

Les circonstances présentes et la juste crainte de se voir prévenir par ceux qui forment des prétentions sur la succession de feu l'Empereur ont demandé de la promptitude dans cette entreprise, et de la vigueur dans son exécution. Mais

si ces raisons n'ont pas voulu permettre au Roi de s'eclaircir préalablement là-dessus avec la reine de Hongrie et de Bohême, elles n'empêcheront jamais S.M. de prendre toujours les intérêts de la maison d'Autriche fortement à cœur, et d'en être le plus ferme appui et soutien, dans toutes les occasions qui se présenteront.

In a letter sent to the King of England on December 4, he stated that he had invaded Silesia in order to guarantee Germany's liberty and to protect Austria, and that he was acting in Austria's true interests. He wrote :

Monsieur mon Frère : La grande confiance que j'ai dans l'amitié de Votre Majesté, et nos intérêts communs dans les conjonctures critiques d'à présent, m'obligent à Lui communiquer sans réserve mes sentiments sur les mesures à prendre dans la situation épineuse des affaires où l'Europe se trouve maintenant, et à Lui faire part en même temps de la démarche à laquelle j'ai été obligé de recourir, pour remédier promptement au danger dont l'Europe entière, la liberté de l'Allemagne, et le système de l'Empire sont menacés également.

La maison d'Autriche, en butte à tous ses ennemis, depuis la perte de son chef et le délabrement total de ses affaires, est sur le point de succomber sous les efforts de ceux qui font ouvertement des prétentions sur la succession, ou qui méditent en secret d'en arracher une partie ; et comme par la situation de mes États je me trouve le plus intéressé à en empêcher les suites et à prévenir surtout ceux qui pourraient avoir formé le dessein de s'emparer de la Silésie, qui fait la sûreté et la barrière de mes provinces limitrophes, je n'ai pu me dispenser de faire entrer mes troupes dans ce duché, pour empêcher que d'autres, dans les conjonctures présentes, ne s'en emparent à mon grand préjudice et à celui des droits incontestables que ma maison a eus de tout temps sur la plus grande partie de ce pays-là, comme je ne manquerai pas de le manifester en temps et lieu.

Mon intention en cela n'a d'autre but que la conservation et le véritable bien de la maison d'Autriche.

Je me suis même expliqué sur cela par mon ministre à la cour de Vienne d'une manière que, si elle entend ses véritables intérêts, elle ne balancera pas un moment à y donner les mains. . . .

In striking at unprepared Austria Frederick had well calculated his chances. Austria and all the other Powers were unready for war. The King tells us in his 'Histoire de mon Temps,' in tones of satisfaction:

Towards the end of 1740 all the Powers discussed, negotiated, intrigued, and strove to come to some arrangement, to form alliances. However, none of the European Powers disposed of troops ready for immediate action. None had had the time to accumulate magazines and stores. So King Frederick made use of this state of affairs in order to carry out his great plan.

Frederick no longer considered his subjects as his equals whose lives should be cherished, as he had done in the 'Anti-Machiavel.' He wrote callously in this 'Histoire de mon Temps': 'When Kings play for provinces, men are merely gambling counters.' Summing up the events of the first Silesian war, the King stated:

The acquisition of Silesia increased Prussia's revenues by 3,600,000 thalers. The greater part of that sum was used to increase the army. In 1741 it consisted of 106 battalions and 191 squadrons, and we shall presently see the use which Frederick made of these troops. . . .

Silesia was united to Prussia. A campaign of two years had sufficed for conquering that important province. The War Fund which the late King had collected was nearly exhausted. Still, it is very cheap to acquire States when they cost only seven or eight millions. Chance helped in carrying through the enterprise successfully. It was necessary that France should allow herself to be dragged into the war with Austria. . . .

The principal cause of the successful conquest of Silesia was the army which had been formed in the course of twenty-

two years by an admirable discipline and which was superior to the troops of all the other States of Europe. Besides, the Prussian generals were true citizens. The ministers were wise and incorruptible, and the whole enterprise was accompanied by that good fortune which often favours youth but shuns old age. If that great undertaking had failed, King Frederick would have been called a foolish prince. He would have been reproached for having begun an enterprise that was beyond his strength. Owing to his success he was declared to be lucky. Indeed, Fortune makes one's reputation. Fortunate men are praised and unfortunate men are blamed.

Silesia was to be merely a stepping-stone towards further conquests. Describing the events of the year 1744, Frederick the Great significantly wrote in his 'Histoire de mon Temps': 'The acquisition of Silesia had given new strength to Prussia. Hence Prussia was now able to carry out with energy the plans of the ruler.'

Frederick's calculations had proved correct. His excellent and well-led army defeated the slowly gathering Austrian troops. Other States desired to take advantage of Austria's weakness and to share in the plunder. France was made to play the same part by Frederick the Second which Austria-Hungary has been made to play by William the Second. In May 1741 Frederick concluded at Nymphenburg with France and Bavaria an alliance against Austria. In June 1742 a separate peace was made between Prussia and Austria at Breslau which gave to Prussia all Silesia. Its possession increased Prussia's population by no less than one half.

France and Bavaria, Prussia's Allies, continued the war against Austria. Gradually Austria gathered strength and defeated her two opponents. Fearing that Austria, having defeated France and Bavaria, might retake Silesia, Frederick resolved to recommence the war and to attack her before she had become too strong. He concluded some alliances, and in 1744 once more acted as the aggressor.

Again he strove to deceive the world as to his motives, and endeavoured to justify his conduct in an 'Exposé des motifs qui ont obligé le Roi de donner des troupes auxiliaires à l'Empereur,'[1] which concluded with the words: 'En un mot, le Roi ne demande rien, et il ne s'agit point de ses intérêts personnels; mais Sa Majesté n'a recours aux armes que pour rendre la liberté à l'Empire, la dignité à l'Empereur, et le repos à l'Europe.'

Once more Frederick the Great was victorious, but as his position had become precarious he made peace with Austria at Dresden. That peace merely confirmed the peace previously made. No territorial gain rewarded Frederick for the second war. He was no doubt disappointed, for his ambitions were by no means satisfied by the conquest of Silesia. In 1752, four years before the outbreak of the Seven Years' War, he wrote a political testament in which he urged upon his successors that they should conquer Polish Prussia, Swedish Pomerania, and especially Saxony, which country he considered a particularly valuable and desirable possession. In his political testament of 1776, the 'Exposé du Gouvernement Prussien,' Frederick wrote:

De nécessité il faut s'emparer de la Saxe. . . . S'il s'agit des vues politiques d'acquisition qui conviennent à cette monarchie, les États de la Saxe sont sans contredit ceux qui lui conviendraient le mieux, en l'arrondissant et lui formant une barrière par les montagnes qui séparent la Saxe de la Bohême. . . . Cette acquisition est d'une nécessité indispensable pour donner à cet État la consistance dont il manque. Car, dès qu'on est en guerre, l'ennemi peut avancer de plain pied jusqu'à Berlin sans trouver la moindre opposition dans son chemin.

Meanwhile the world had no longer any illusions as to the character of Frederick the Second. It had recognised

[1] This Emperor, who disputed Maria Theresa's succession, was Charles the Seventh, Elector of Bavaria. He was set up by Frederick the Great.

that the King was not merely a poet, a philosopher, and a champion of all the virtues, but that in him were combined unscrupulousness with craft, and craft with power. The nations around saw in Frederick a danger to the peace of Europe, and their alarm was increased by the fact that Frederick's diplomacy was feverishly active in every quarter, and that his army was constantly increasing in strength.

Very naturally his neighbours wished to protect themselves in time. Austria and Saxony concluded an alliance in 1745, and Russia joined it. Through the bribery of some officials, Frederick had become acquainted with these arrangements which were to restrain his aggression. He was annoyed, and in 1756 he resolved to embark upon a third war of attack, and he began it by invading coveted Saxony in August of that year. As usual he made a surprise attack. When, in July, the Saxon Court became seriously concerned at Prussia's military preparations, the King wrote on the 10th of that month to his Ambassador at Dresden:

I find it somewhat extraordinary that Saxony has become alarmed at my so-called military preparations, and that I should be believed to be organising three armies for war. You must positively assure those who speak to you on the subject that no army is being formed, that only some regiments are being moved according to the ordinary routine as they are in other countries, such as Austria.

The following month Frederick invaded Saxony with a large army, ostensibly on the ground that necessity compelled him to attack Austria by way of Saxony, because Austria intended to strike at Prussia. Saxony was thus made another Belgium. On August 26 the King wrote to his representative at Dresden in tones of unctuous rectitude:

The unjust proceedings and dangerous plans of Austria are forcing me to violent measures, which I should like to

have avoided out of love of peace and of public tranquillity. Circumstances compel me to march my army into Saxony in order to reach Bohemia. . . . In making this declaration in a most polite and tactful manner to the King, you should impress upon him the fact that necessity compels me, and that the Vienna Court is solely responsible for these hard and disagreeable consequences.

The British Ambassador Mitchell reported on August 27 to his Government a conversation with Frederick the Great in which the King had stated that he was compelled to forestall the Austrians, and that 'nothing but the absolute necessity of his affairs made him take that step.' We are reminded of the German declaration made at the beginning of the present war that France's intention to attack Germany by way of Belgium compelled her to invade that country in self-defence.

Having occupied Dresden, Frederick had the archives searched. The defensive treaties between Saxony, Austria, and Russia and much correspondence were discovered, and these were published and described to the world as a vile conspiracy against Prussia. William the Second merely repeated at Brussels the performance of his ancestor at Dresden.

Having invaded Saxony, Frederick explained his conduct to the world in the usual way. The war had been forced upon him. Once more he was the innocent victim. In his celebrated 'Mémoire Raisonné,' justifying the invasion, which was distributed in thousands of copies in all countries, and which may be found in Hertzberg's 'Recueil,' we read :

Les raisons, qui ont mis le Roi dans la nécessité de prendre les armes contre la Cour de Vienne et de s'assurer pendant cette guerre des États héréditaires[1] du Roi de Pologne, sont fondées sur les règles les plus exactes de l'équité et de la justice. Ce ne sont pas motifs d'ambition ni des

[1] That is to say, Saxony. Frederick Augustus the Second, Elector of Saxony by inheritance, was, like his father, the elected King of Poland.

vues d'aggrandissement. C'est une suite de projets, de complots et de trahisons de la part de ces deux Cours qui ont obligé Sa Majesté de songer à sa défense et à sa sûreté. Les découvertes qu'Elle a faites sur cette importante matière mettent cette vérité dans tout son jour et forment une éspèce de démonstration de la justice de sa cause et des mauvais procédés de ceux qui l'ont forcée d'en venir à ces tristes extrémités. . . .

In German and even in English histories may be read the fable that a European Coalition had been formed with the object of despoiling Prussia, that Prussia was forced into the Seven Years' War. Yet Count Hertzberg, who wrote the 'Mémoire Raisonné' at Frederick's orders, and who conducted the Prussian Foreign Office in Frederick's time during more than two decades, admitted himself in a paper read before the Berlin Academy in 1787, the year after Frederick's death, that in 1756 there had been no conspiracy against Prussia and no plan to attack her; that combined action had been planned by Austria, Saxony, and Russia only if Prussia should be the aggressor. A full account of his lecture may be found in Schoell's 'Histoire Abrégée des Traités de Paix.' The Prussian historian von Raumer more recently stated that 'Frederick had not proved, and could not prove, that a formal offensive alliance against him had been concluded between Austria, Russia, and Saxony.'

Frederick the Great, like Napoleon the First, kept his own counsel. We do not know for certain why he invaded Saxony in 1756. As he was not threatened by a hostile coalition as he alleged, as the second Silesian War had not brought him the hoped-for territorial increment, and as in 1752[1] he had, in his political testament, urged his successors to acquire Saxony, one may safely conclude that he went to war in the hope of acquiring that country.

Germany's assertions that a conspiracy was formed

[1] As we have seen, he also urged the acquisition of Saxony in his later 'Political Testament' of 1776.

against her by King Edward and Sir Edward Grey finds its exact counterpart in Frederick's assertions made in 1756.

The peculiar attitude of modern Germany towards treaties, which are treated as scraps of paper if they are inconvenient to her and as sacred undertakings if she can benefit by them, is based on the precedents set by Frederick the Great and upon his teachings. In his 'Anti-Machiavel' the King urged that honesty was the best policy, that faith should be kept by rulers, that treaties should be religiously observed, as will be seen by reference to the extracts given at the beginning of this chapter. These views soon changed when a change was deemed advantageous. In the Preface of the 'Histoire de mon Temps' we read:

Posterity will perhaps see with surprise in these Memoirs accounts of treaties which have been concluded and broken. Although examples of broken treaties are common, the author of these Memoirs would require better reasons than precedent for explaining his conduct in breaking treaties. A sovereign must be guided by the interest of the State. In the following cases alliances may be broken:

(1) When one's ally does not fulfil his engagements;
(2) When one's ally wishes to deceive one, and when one cannot by any other means prevent him;
(3) When necessity (*force majeure*) compels one;
(4) When one lacks means to continue the war.

By the will of Fate wealth influences everything. Rulers are slaves of their means. To promote the interest of their State is a law to them, a law which is inviolable. If a ruler must be ready to sacrifice his life for the welfare of his subjects, he must be still more ready to sacrifice, for the benefit of his subjects, solemn engagements which he has undertaken if their observance would be harmful to his people. Cases of broken treaties may be encountered everywhere. It is not our intention to justify all breaches of treaty. Nevertheless, I venture to assert that there are cases when necessity or wisdom, prudence or consideration of the welfare of the people, oblige sovereigns to transgress

because the violation of a treaty is often the only means whereby complete ruin can be avoided.

To me it seems clear and obvious that a private person must scrupulously observe the given word, even if he should have bound himself without sufficient thought. If a private person breaks his contract the damaged person can have recourse to the protection of the law, and however the decision may go, only an individual suffers. But to what tribunal can a sovereign appeal if another sovereign breaks his treaty? The word of a private person involves in misfortune only a single human being, while that of sovereigns can create calamities for entire nations. The question may therefore be summed up thus: Is it better that a nation should perish, or that a sovereign should break his treaty? Who can be stupid enough to hesitate in answering this question?

In other words, advantage was to decide whether a treaty was to be kept or broken. Frederick broke his treaties shamelessly. He abandoned his ally, France, because it suited him, as he frankly admitted in his 'Histoire de mon Temps.' The King wrote:

We must now touch the reasons which led to an armistice between Prussia and Austria. This is a delicate question. The policy of the King was wrongful and shady (*scabreuse*).

The object of the war, as far as King Frederick was concerned, was to conquer Silesia. He concluded alliances with Bavaria and France only with that object in view. However, France and her Allies looked upon the object of the alliance in a different way. The Cabinet at Versailles was convinced that Austria had arrived at the hour of her destiny, and that her power would be destroyed for all time. The downfall of Austria was incompatible with the liberty of Germany, and did in no way suit the King of Prussia, who worked for the elevation of his dynasty, and who did not intend to sacrifice his troops in order to create new rivals to himself. . . .

Had King Frederick too strenuously supported the

operations of the French troops, their success would have been dangerous to himself. From an Ally he would have become a subject of France. . . .

Queen Maria Theresa stood at the edge of a precipice. An armistice gave her breathing time, and the King could break the armistice at any moment convenient to himself.

France learned the meaning of the saying, 'travailler pour le Roi de Prusse.'

In deserting France, Frederick explained his conduct in a letter written June 10, 1742, to Cardinal de Fleury, the principal Minister of France, in which he stated:

L'avenir ne m'offre que des perspectives funestes, et dans une situation aussi critique (quoique dans l'amertume de mon cœur) je me suis vu dans la nécessité de me sauver du naufrage et de gagner un asile. Si des conjonctures fâcheuses m'ont obligé de prendre un parti que la nécessité justifie, vous me trouverez toujours fidèle à remplir les engagements dont l'exécution ne dépend que de moi.

These mendacious professions of impotence to continue the war glaringly contrast with the real reasons for abandoning France given by the King in his posthumously published history.

Although Frederick readily broke treaties which were not advantageous to himself, he condemned in the strongest terms those nations which failed to fulfil their engagements towards Prussia. To the end of his days he expressed hatred and contempt for England because she had broken her treaty with Prussia towards the end of the Seven Years' War. Modern Germany tells us that she was justified in breaking her treaty regarding Belgium, but that Italy acted criminally in refusing to participate in the Belgian crime.

Bismarck induced Italy to join the Austro-German Alliance, as he repeatedly stated, not so much in the hope of obtaining her support in time of need, but in order to

keep her neutral in case of a great war. Herein he followed Frederick's teachings, for the King wrote in his 'Anti-Machiavel':

It is frequently asserted that treaties are useless because their stipulations are hardly ever fulfilled, and that men are no more scrupulous now than they were in former ages. To those who argue thus I would reply that although both in ancient and in modern times rulers have failed to fulfil their treaty obligations, it is always advantageous to conclude treaties. An ally is an enemy the less, and if your ally does not come to your aid, you induce him by means of an alliance to remain neutral—at least for some time.

Sham alliances were highly valued by Frederick. He wrote to his Minister von Podewils on June 1, 1742:

For the future security of Prussia's new possessions I rely upon a good and numerous army, a large war treasure, strong fortresses, and sham alliances—that is, upon alliances which at least will make some impression upon outsiders. . . .

The easiest way to neutralise a powerful country and a possible future enemy seemed to the King an alliance with that very State. Therefore we read in his 'Exposé du Gouvernement Prussien,' his 'Political Testament' of 1776:

One of the first political principles is to endeavour to become an ally of that one of one's neighbours who may become most dangerous to one's State. For that reason we have an alliance with Russia, and thus we have our back free as long as the alliance lasts.

During the last two centuries all the Russian Czars except one married German princesses. German princesses—the supply is very large—have sat upon many foreign thrones and often influenced the policy of nations in Germany's favour. Prusso-Germany's matrimonial policy was established on a broad basis and most highly developed

by Frederick the Great. In order to influence Russia's policy in Prussia's favour he strove in 1744 to direct Russia's policy through German influence in the ruling family as he had done in 1740. The King has told us in his 'Histoire de mon Temps':

Nothing would have been more opposed to Prussia's interests than to allow the formation of a matrimonial alliance between Russia and a Saxony hostile to Prussia. At the same time, nothing would have seemed more unnatural than to sacrifice a Prussian princess of the blood royal in order to dislodge the Saxon princess whom the Saxon Court wished to give to the Grand Duke to wife. Another expedient was necessary. Of all the German princesses of marriageable age none seemed more suitable for Russia and none seemed more likely to serve the interests of Prussia at the Russian Court than the Princess of Zerbst.

With the object of supplanting the Saxon princess by the Princess of Zerbst, complicated intrigues were entered upon, and they proved completely successful. The Russian Czarina was prevailed upon to consent, and the Princess of Zerbst, known to history as Catherine the Second, the Great, went to Russia and influenced Russian policy in Prussia's favour. By making similar use of family influences, Frederick the Great strove to direct, in Prussia's favour, the policy of Sweden, which then was still a very important State. Frederick has told us in his 'Histoire de mon Temps':

When the Russian Czarina had agreed to it that the Princess of Zerbst should marry the Grand Duke, her son, matters were made easy for marrying Princess Ulrike of Prussia to the new Crown Prince of Sweden. Prussia founded her security upon these two family alliances with Russia and Sweden. A Prussian Princess close to the Swedish throne could not possibly be hostile to her brother King Frederick, and a German Princess married to a Russian Grand Duke, a Princess who had been brought up and

educated on Prussian territory and who owed her elevation to the action of the Prussian King, could not desert him without ingratitude.

Describing the events of the year 1773, King Frederick stated in his ' Mémoires depuis la Paix de Hubertusbourg ' :

By careful management and intrigue the King succeeded in inducing the Russian Czarina to choose the Princess of Darmstadt, the sister of the Princess of Prussia, as a wife for her son the Grand Duke Paul. In order to have influence in Russia it was necessary for Prussia to place there persons who were likely to favour Prussia. It was to be hoped that the Prince of Prussia, when succeeding King Frederick, would be able to draw great advantage from the fact that his wife's sister had married the Russian heir to the throne.

Bribery, corruption, and spying have been among the most conspicuous characteristics of the policy of modern Germany. German money is lavishly spent abroad for influencing opinion and the action of foreign Governments, and according to apparently reliable reports the German Emperor himself has taken a strong and personal interest in the more seamy side of the German Secret Service. If these reports are true, he has acted as a faithful disciple of Frederick the Great. In his time spying, corruption, and bribery were brought to the highest perfection.

We have seen in the beginning of this chapter that Frederick, when intending to attack Austria for the first time in 1740, sent to Russia Baron Winterfeld. He was to influence his father-in-law, Field-Marshal Münnich, who at the time was all-powerful in Russia, and he was to resort freely to bribery. On December 6, 1740, Frederick wrote to his Ambassador at Petrograd :

You must use all your skill to gain Field-Marshal Münnich to my interests, and must spare neither compliments nor promises of gratitude. You can assure him that if, by employing his authority and credit, he induces the Regent

to support me, I will give him and his posterity in perpetuity the estate of Biegen, which has a yearly income of more than 5000 thalers, and I shall give him as well the County of Wartenberg in Silesia. . . .

As both the properties mentioned were in Silesia, which Frederick was about to overrun and conquer, Münnich was directly interested in the success of Frederick's piratical expedition.

Two days later he wrote in the instructions for Count Gotter, who was sent to Vienna with that celebrated ultimatum to Maria Theresa which arrived two days after the Prussian army had invaded Silesia:

If the Cabinet in Vienna can be gained to Prussia's interests by bribery, my Ambassador, von Borcke, had instructions given him on the 7th of this month to offer up to 200,000 thalers to the Grand Chancellor, Count Zinzendorff, and 100,000 thalers to the Secretary of State, Toussaint. If others have to be bribed, Count Gotter should let me know, and I will give my orders.

On January 11, 1741, Frederick wrote to his Ambassador in Petrograd, von Mardefeld, that if the estates which were to be offered to Field-Marshal Münnich by his son-in-law, Count Winterfeld, Prussia's special envoy, should not suffice to gain him over to Prussia's interests, Winterfeld could dispose of 100,000 thalers as well. In 1745 Herr von Mardefeld was ordered to offer 40,000 thalers to Count Bestucheff if Russia would remain neutral during the second Silesian War.

When, in the beginning of the Seven Years' War, Frederick the Great became hard pressed by his enemies, it occurred to him that he might possibly detach France by bribing Madame de Pompadour, the all-powerful mistress of King Louis the Fifteenth. The political correspondence of the King, published on behalf of the German Government in a large number of volumes, contains a number of references

to that interesting transaction. For instance, on July 7, 1757, Frederick wrote to his sister:

My dear Sister,—It is too kind of you to take so much trouble with my affairs. I am ashamed to abuse your kindness. Still, as you are willing to promote the conclusion of peace, I would ask you to send M. de Mirabeau to France. I will gladly bear the expenses of his journey, and he may offer to the King's favourite a sum up to 500,000 thalers for the conclusion of a peace. He may even increase his offer far above the sum named, if Madame de Pompadour should bind herself to procure to Prussia not only peace, but also some advantages. You understand, of course, that this business must be treated with the greatest delicacy, and that my name must not be connected with it. If the people in England should get wind of this transaction, all would be lost. . . .

Soon Frederick increased the bribe which he was willing to offer to Madame de Pompadour. On September 26, 1767, he wrote to Colonel von Balbi:

. . . I sincerely hope that the secret negotiations which I have opened will substantiate, unless cessions of territory should be required. As I have been informed that the transaction might be soon concluded if I could make up my mind to cede to Madame de Pompadour the principality of Neuchatel and Valangin for life, I have much pleasure in telling you that I shall raise no difficulties, and I authorise you expressly by the present letter to mention this offer to your friends so that they can boldly insinuate and promise to Madame de Pompadour on my behalf that I shall cede to her the principality named for life as soon as peace is concluded between France and Prussia. The revenues of the principality will be hers, and I trust that she will use her whole influence so that the conditions of peace will be advantageous, or at least little onerous, to Prussia. . . .

Frederick the Great achieved his master stroke in corruption during the period of peace which preceded the

Seven Years' War, when men in the Austrian and Saxon Diplomatic Services whom he had bribed delivered to him the most important secrets of State. The King tells us in his 'Guerre de Sept Ans':

A man named Weingarten, who was secretary to La Puebla, the Austrian Ambassador in Berlin, allowed himself to be used by King Frederick, and furnished the King with the most secret correspondence which passed between the Austrian Ambassador and the Court of Vienna and the Court of Petersburg.

This man, whose services were exceedingly important, at last became suspected by his master. He was lucky enough to notice it in time. He escaped from the Embassy and claimed the King's protection. He was withdrawn with difficulty from the prosecution which the Austrian Ambassador set on foot, was hidden and sent to Kolberg, where he changed his name.

Although that source of information was thus cut off, there was another channel by which the King received reliable information regarding the plans of his enemies. He was well served by an employee of the Secret Chancellery of Saxony at Dresden. That man handed every week to the Prussian Minister to Saxony the despatches which the Dresden Court received from Petersburg and Vienna, and he also supplied him with copies of all the treaties deposited in the Dresden archives.

The employee of the Foreign Office at Dresden mentioned by the King was the notorious Friedrich Wilhelm Menzel. He was engaged, not by one of the King's underlings without his knowledge, but by the direct orders of Frederick himself, and the King settled all the details regarding this man in a letter sent on April 8, 1752, to von Maltzahn, his Ambassador in Dresden. We read in it:

Quant à celui que le sieur Rehnitz vous a amené [Menzel] je vois, par les échantillons que vous m'avez marqués de son savoir-faire, que ce sera un sujet bien utile et dont nous

saurions tirer des connaissances très utiles. C'est aussi pourquoi vous devez vous arranger et prendre les concerts qu'il faut avec lui.

J'ai résolu de lui faire payer une pension jusqu'à 2000 écus par an, selon que vous conviendrez avec lui, et mon conseiller privé Eichel a mes ordres de vous faire parvenir cet argent en tels termes que vous le désirerez, soit par des exprès ou par des remises en argent, tout comme vous le jugerez convenable.

Pour vous mettre aussi en état de faire d'abord des largesses à cet homme, j'ai fait ordonner par le conseiller privé Eichel au banquier Splitberger de vous remettre la somme de 500 écus sous le prétexte d'un argent qui lui avait été remis par vos parents, afin de vous le faire payer à Dresde.

Au surplus, vous vous garderez bien de ne rien communiquer au département des affaires étrangères des avis que vous tirerez de ce canal, sans mes ordres exprès, parceque je veux, pour être d'autant mieux assuré du secret, que tout ceci ne passe que par mes mains seules. C'est aussi pourquoi vous ne me ferez autrement vos rapports à ce sujet que par le chiffre immédiat dont vous êtes en possession.

Quant au sieur Rehnitz, comme je crains tout comme vous qu'il ne gâte par sa conduite imprudente et inconsidérée toute cette affaire vous tâcherez à le disposer de partir le plus tôt possible de Dresde en l'assurant que ses affaires particulières qu'il a là, n'en souffriraient pas, et que je lui saurais gré, s'il voulait faire un tour dans le pays de Saxe pour engager et m'amener ici quelques *Parchentmacher* [skilled artizans] que je voudrais bien établir dans ce pays-ci.

Je remets tout à votre dextérité et prudence et attendrai votre rapport sur la manière que vous aurez tout arrangé.

FREDERIC.

Between 1752 and 1756 Menzel betrayed the diplomatic secrets of Saxony and of her Allies to Frederick. How greatly the King was interested in Menzel's activity will be seen by the fact that he is mentioned or alluded to in no less than thirty-six of the King's published letters.

Frederick cherished him like the apple of his eye, and frequently had enjoined care upon him, sent him on holidays, &c.

Frederick was the most thrifty of monarchs in all matters except bribery and corruption. Professor von Ludewig, mentioned in an earlier part of this chapter, when set to work to prove Prussia's historic claims to Silesia, was paid three thalers (9*s.*) a day for his labour, and he was remunerated for his forty years' activity in collecting the necessary material to support the King's claim 'with a little wind that costs nothing,' in the shape of a title, as von Podewils put it.

Frederick attached the highest importance to the possession of a large fund of ready money to be used for political purposes at the right moment. He wrote in his 'Anti-Machiavel':

Cardinal de Retz stated rightly that in important affairs money should be regarded as of no consequence. A sovereign should therefore always be in the position of controlling large funds usable in case of necessity.

In his 'Political Testament' of 1776 Frederick stated:

Statesmanship ought to look as far as possible into the future and calculate the chances and the constellations of Europe, and make use of them either for concluding alliances or for foiling the plans of Prussia's enemies.

It must be remembered that it is not possible to shape the course of history. However, opportunities must be seized when they occur. Hence the finances of the country must always be in order. Herein lies the reason that there should always be kept a large reserve of ready money, for then only can the Government strike immediately when the right moment for action has arrived. War itself should be conducted in accordance with the true principles of statesmanship. One must strike the most sanguinary blows at one's enemies.

Frederick the Great, like William the Second, endeavoured to produce dissension within the Governments of countries the activities of which he desired to cripple. Immediately after his first attack upon Silesia, on January 6, 1741, he wrote to his Ambassador at Petrograd :

You will skilfully throw an apple of discord among the Russian ministers so that we can carry out the principal aim which we have in view. I leave you full liberty to employ not only flatteries and promises, but as much money as you think necessary, and Major von Winterfeld can draw on the offices of the Company.

Frederick the Great was absolutely unscrupulous. He deliberately brought about three wars, and he employed unhesitatingly the worst methods of Machiavelli. Nevertheless, like Shakespeare's Richard the Third, he posed habitually as an injured innocent. In his ' Guerre de Sept Ans ' he described his great and good opponent as follows :

King Frederick had, in the person of the Empress Maria Theresa, an ambitious and vindictive enemy, and she was all the more dangerous as she was a woman who stuck obstinately to her opinions and was implacable. Devoured by ambition, Maria Theresa wished to pursue glory in every way.

When, soon after the beginning of the Seven Years' War, France and Sweden joined Austria, Russia, and Saxony against Prussia, and when Frederick began to experience serious defeats, he cried to Heaven about the wickedness of his opponents. On July 13, 1756, he wrote despairingly to his sister Wilhelmine :

I am in the position of a traveller who is surrounded by a number of rascals and on the point of being murdered because these robbers wish to divide his goods among themselves. Since the League of Cambrai there has never been an example of a conspiracy similar to that which that criminal

triumvirate has engineered against me. It is infamous, a disgrace for mankind, and a crime against morality. Has the world ever seen three powerful princes forming a plot to destroy a fourth who had done nothing to them?

I have never had any differences with France or with Russia, and still less with Sweden. Three men acting thus against a neighbour would be condemned by the law. Nevertheless, we see three monarchs giving such a horrible example to their subjects. I am a king, and believe that I should think like a king.

It has always been my principle that to a Sovereign his good name should be more precious than his life. A conspiracy has been hatched against me. The Court at Vienna has insulted me, and I should have considered myself dishonoured had I borne the insult. Thus the war was begun, and a band of rogues attacked me from all sides That is my story.

In the introduction to his 'Mémoires depuis la Paix de Hubertusbourg,' the arch-deceiver among kings protested: 'During my whole life I have never deceived anyone. Still less shall I deceive posterity.'

Modern Germany, like Frederician Prussia, loudly protests her innocence. Her alliances were legitimate, and were purely defensive. Those of her opponents were meant for aggression, were a conspiracy against Germany. According to her protestations, Germany has never deceived or attacked any Power. She is a peaceful State, and the other nations have fallen on her without any cause, desiring to destroy Germany and German civilisation.

Modern Germany is guided by the principles of *Machtpolitik*. It is frequently assumed that the policy of using power ruthlessly has been invented by Bismarck, Treitschke, Bernhardi, &c. In reality, the policy of using power ruthlessly was evolved and brought to the highest perfection by Frederick the Great. He wrote in his 'Histoire de mon Temps': 'Royal crowns are won only by means of big guns.' Believing that all policy was founded in the

last resort upon power, upon force, life in peace was for Frederick the Great a constant preparation for war. He wrote in his 'Mémoires depuis la Paix de Hubertusbourg': 'Peace was to the Prussian armies a school, and war was the practice.'

Although Frederick was of opinion that States were founded not upon right but upon force, and although he believed that States could be established, enlarged, and maintained only by force, he absolutely disapproved of the wanton abuse of force. Like Cardinal Richelieu and Prince Bismarck, he was absolutely opposed to wars of aggression, to wars of precaution, to wars of prestige, to rash interference in international affairs. We read in his preface to the 'Histoire de mon Temps':

All who have bowels of compassion and look at things as they are must be deeply moved by the evils which statesmen inflict upon the people, either through thoughtlessness or through their passions.

Reason prescribes for us a rule of conduct which, in my opinion, every statesman should observe. It is, to make use of one's opportunities, and to embark upon a dangerous enterprise only when circumstances are favourable, but not to force the pace and to leave all to chance. There are moments which one should seize, when one should act with the utmost energy, and there are others when prudence compels us to remain inactive. This question requires our most profound thought, and we must examine not only the present position of affairs, but also study all the consequences to which our enterprise may give rise, and weigh the means possessed by ourselves against those of our enemies, in order to be able to gauge which side is likely to prevail. If the decision should not be left to cold calculation, but should be influenced or dictated by passion, a happy issue of a great enterprise is impossible.

Statesmanship requires patience, and the masterpiece of the skilled statesman consists in doing the right thing at the right moment and in the right way.

NEW[illegible], R. I.

History is the school of princes. They should strive to learn from the mistakes made in past centuries, so as to avoid them. Thus they may learn how to map out a wise policy, and how to carry it out step by step. Only he who has best calculated his chances and who has most carefully laid down his line of action, can hope to overcome men who act less logically.

It will be noticed that Frederick the Great recommended coupling energy with moderation.

When, in 1740–41, he had succeeded in wresting Silesia from Austria, he desired that Prussia should remain at peace, and should, by a policy of moderation, reconcile Europe to the great increase of Prussia's power. On June 21, 1742, he wrote to his Minister Podewils :

At the present moment our task consists in making the capitals of Europe accustomed to see Prussia occupy the great position which she has obtained by her war with Austria, and I believe that great moderation and a conciliatory attitude towards our neighbours will help us in this.

The policy recommended in the foregoing letter singularly resembles that urged by Bismarck in the thirtieth chapter of his posthumous memoirs, in which we read :

We ought to do all we can to weaken the bad feeling which has been called forth through our growth to the position of a real Great Power by honourable and peaceful use of our influence, and so convince the world that a German hegemony in Europe is more useful and less partizan, and also less harmful for the freedom of others, than would be that of France, Russia, or England.

Frederick the Great and Bismarck would undoubtedly have loudly disapproved of the war which William the Second so rashly began in 1914.

Frederick the Great, like Bismarck, spent the later years of his life in laying down the principles of statesmanship

for the benefit of future generations, and Frederick, like Bismarck, looked with anxiety and pessimism towards the future. In the concluding passages of his history of the Seven Years' War he stated :

Time, which heals everything, will no doubt give back to Prussia her old prosperity and splendour. The other Powers also will recover. However, in future other ambitious men will bring about new wars and new disasters to mankind, for it is a peculiarity of men that they will not learn by experience. The follies committed by the fathers are not heeded by the sons. Every generation must make its own experiences. . . .

May Heaven—supposing Providence looks down upon our human miseries—protect Prussia and the Kings who will govern the State in future against the calamities from which the country has suffered in the troublous times which I have described, and may they never be compelled to have recourse to those terrible and violent measures which had to be employed to protect the State against the ambitious hatred of all Europe, which wished to destroy the House of Brandenburg and to exterminate for all time the very name of Prussia.

In many passages of Frederick's writing we find a free expression of his pessimistic forebodings ,which were only natural in view of the worthlessness of his nephew and successor, Frederick William the Second. In his ' Histoire de mon Temps ' we read : ' La fortune est souvent plus funeste aux princes que l'adversité. La première les enivre de presomption ; le seconde les rend circonspects et modestes.' Good fortune was indeed fatal to Frederick William the Second and Frederick William the Third. It made them presumptuous. They neglected the State, and allowed the army to decline. The rule of these two princes led to Prussia's downfall in 1806.

Frederick recommended that Prussia should follow a cautious, conservative, and moderate policy. He desired

that the country should not lightly engage in war, that Prussia's sovereigns should only rarely engage in hostilities. The great King thought it particularly important that Prussia should go to war only if the campaign was likely to be highly profitable to the State. He wrote in his 'Political Testament' of 1776:

As Prussia is not rich, care must be taken not to enter into a war where nothing can be gained. In such a war one exhausts one's strength, one can only lose, and if later on some good opportunity should arise, one cannot take advantage of it.

All territories lying at a distance from the State are a burden. A village on the frontier is more valuable than a principality sixty miles away.

It is necessary to hide with care, and as much as possible, one's ambitious plans, and it is advisable to awaken envy among the European Powers, for their division enables Prussia to strike. . . . Secrecy is a most important virtue both in statecraft and in war.

During the Seven Years' War, Prussia, supported by England, successfully resisted the united forces of Austria, Russia, France, Saxony, and Sweden. More than once she suffered serious defeats. Yet she was not overwhelmed. The causes of her successful resistance to nearly all Europe should be of particular interest at the present moment when Germany is engaged in a similar and apparently hopeless struggle. In the Seven Years' War Prussia fought against three Great Powers. Now, Germany fights against three races, the Latin, the Slavonic, and the Anglo-Saxon race. The highest authority on the causes of Prussia's successful resistance is undoubtedly Frederick the Great himself. In 1759 Prussia suffered a number of most disastrous defeats, and the King's position seemed to be desperate. In commenting on the campaign of that year the King wrote:

That campaign was perhaps the most disastrous of all.

and Prussia would have been lost if her enemies, who knew how to defeat her, had known equally well how to take advantage of their victories.

How Prussia weathered her greatest defeat may be seen from the Battle of Kunersdorf. At that battle the Prussians lost a large number of guns to the Russians, and an enormous number of killed, wounded, and prisoners. At the end of the day scarcely 10,000 men of Frederick's army remained, and these were a flying mob. Commenting on that disastrous battle the King wrote :

Had the Russians known how to take advantage of their victory, had they pursued the discouraged Prussian troops, Prussia would have been lost. Owing to their inaction, they gave King Frederick time to make good his losses. Nearly all the Prussian generals were wounded. Prussia's enemies had it in their power to end the war. They need only have given their defeated enemy the *coup de grâce*. But they stood still and, instead of acting with vigour and energy, as the occasion demanded, congratulated each other on their success and praised their good fortune.

Prince Soltikoff explained the reason of his inactivity. When Marshal Daun, the Austrian general, urged him to continue his operation with vigour he replied : 'I have done enough during this year. I have won two battles which have cost Russia 27,000 men, and before going into action once more I wish to wait for a couple of Austrian victories. It is not right that the Russian troops should bear the brunt and do all the fighting.' Only with difficulty could the Austrians induce the victorious Russians to cross the river Oder.

Commenting on the campaign of 1761–62, Frederick the Great told us :

At the end of the last campaign in the opinion of all statesmen Prussia was lost. She was saved by the death of a woman, and was supported and saved by the help of that

Power which had been most eager to destroy her. In a similar manner Madame Masham saved France in the War of Succession by her intrigues against Lady Marlborough. How vain are all our calculations! The smallest accident influences and changes the fate of empires. Chance makes a plaything of us, laughs at the vain wisdom of us mortals elevates some and overthrows others.

Frederick the Great was saved from annihilation, as he himself admitted, through the mistakes of his opponents, and especially through their lack of unity. When all seemed lost Fate saved the King by the death of the Empress Elizabeth of Russia. Her son, Peter the Third, a blind admirer of Frederick, not only made peace with Prussia, but concluded an alliance with her.

When matters were desperate with Prussia, Frederick tried to divide the Allies against themselves. Writing of the year 1760, he told us in his 'Guerre de Sept Ans':

From day to day the war became more difficult, and the risks and dangers constantly increased. Although the Prussians were fortunate, Fortune betrayed them several times. Nothing could be hoped for from Italy, and Turkey had so far not seemed inclined to let it come to a breach with Austria. Therefore the only resource left consisted in dividing or separating the Powers which had formed the anti-Prussian Alliance. With this object in view negotiations were entered upon both in France and in Russia.

As we have seen, the negotiations with Russia proved successful in the end through the death of the Czarina.

In the 'Histoire de la Guerre de Sept Ans,' Frederick summed up the causes of Prussia's successful resistance as follows:

In 1757, during the second year of the Seven Years' War, it seemed impossible that Prussia would be able to resist the attack of the Powers arrayed against her. If we

carefully examine the causes which led to so unexpected an issue, we find that the following reasons prevented Prussia's downfall:

(1) The lack of agreement and harmony among the Powers which formed the Anti-Prussian Alliance; their different interests, which prevented them agreeing with regard to the military operations which were undertaken; the lack of unity among the Russian and Austrian generals, which made them over-cautious when opportunity demanded that they should act with energy and destroy Prussia, as they might easily have done.

(2) The over-artful policy of the Court at Vienna. That Court made it a principle to ask Austria's allies to undertake the most difficult and the most dangerous operations, so that at the end of the war Austria should possess a better and stronger army than that of any of the other Powers. The pursuit of this policy caused the Austrian generals to act with over-great caution. Hence they abstained from giving the *coup de grâce* to Prussia when Prussia's position was absolutely desperate.

(3) The death of the Russian Czarina, with whose demise the Russo-Austrian Alliance died as well; Russia's desertion of the anti-Prussian Alliance, and her alliance with King Frederick, which was concluded by the Czarina's successor, Peter the Third.

Frederick the Great summed up the losses caused by the Seven Years' War as follows:

Prussia had lost by the war 180,000 men, and in addition 33,000 people had died owing to the ravages of the Russians. According to estimates, the Russian troops lost 120,000 men. The Austrians estimated their loss at 140,000 men, the French theirs at 200,000 combatants, the English and their Allies lost 160,000 men, the Swedes and the troops of the German Circles 23,000 men. The French Government had lost all credit, and the French commerce with both Indias had been destroyed by the English. Sweden was on the point of becoming bankrupt. Prussia had suffered most, for the Austrians, French, Russians, Swedes, and the troops

of the Circles under the Duke of Wurtemberg had ravaged the country.

Before his advent to power, Frederick the Great had posed as a philanthropist, a lover of peace, and a friend of virtue. Animated by insatiable ambition and recognising that he could easily conquer Silesia, he attacked Austria in 1740, little heeding the consequences. That reckless and criminal attack led to two further wars, and Prussia would have been lost had not chance saved her at the most critical moment.

The Seven Years' War alone cost more than a million lives; and according to Frederick's own statement, 'the state of Brandenburg, after the Seven Years' War, resembled that caused by the Thirty Years' War.' Frederick the Great had declared in his 'Anti-Machiavel' that his model was Marcus Aurelius, while that of the admirers of Machiavelli was Caesar Borgia. Frederick himself, like his imitator William the Second, was in many respects another Borgia; but William the Second has improved upon his ancestor by using weapons which Frederick disdained and condemned.

The Seven Years' War inflicted terrible sufferings upon Prussia and all Europe, but it laid the foundation of Prussia's greatness, of modern Germany. By his conquests Frederick nearly doubled the national territory, increased Prussia's population from 2,250,000 to 5,500,000 inhabitants, and made her one of the Great Powers. Besides, Prussia's successful resistance to nearly all Europe enormously increased her prestige. It enabled Prussia to weather her defeats of 1806, and the remembrance of the Seven Years' War is now encouraging Germany and inspiring her with a firm hope of a final victory.

The history of the Seven Years' War suffices to show that it will not be an easy matter for a great European Coalition to triumph over the Germanic combination of

Powers. The experience of the Seven Years' War and of many other wars proves that coalitions suffer from serious disadvantages, that disunion is liable to appear in their ranks, and that a dictatorship, such as that which exists permanently in Germany, has enormous advantages over Governments less well organised for war. In the time of Frederick the Great lack of energy and of initiative in warfare lamed the power of the Coalition.

After all, it is only natural that amateurs who co-operate with difficulty are at a disadvantage in contending against perfectly drilled and organised professionals, that a military State which absolutely obeys a single will enjoys enormous advantage over several non-military States. Modern war is conducted by armed nations. Exactly as the command of an army cannot safely be entrusted to a committee, but only to a single commander-in-chief, the guidance of a nation at war is best entrusted to a single man, to a dictator. That was clearly recognised by the ancient Romans, the most fervent republicans the world has seen, and the modern democracies that are fighting for their liberty may do well to learn from Rome's example.

Austria suffered grievously at Prussia's hands in the time of Frederick the Great and of Prince Bismarck. Is she willing to be ruined completely by William the Second, who has dragged her into the present war, or will she remember her sufferings and turn at the most critical moment against her ancient enemy, as Bismarck foreshadowed? He wrote in his 'Memoirs':

> If in Austria anti-German tendencies, whether national or religious, were to gain strength, and Austria leagued herself with Germany's enemies for the purpose of making a clean sweep of the results of 1866, no words are needed to show how greatly aggravated would then be the peril of Germany. This idea is pessimistic, but no means chimerical.
>
> If, then, changes were to occur in the political situation of Europe of such a kind as to make an anti-German policy

appear *salus publica* for Austria-Hungary, public faith could not be expected to induce her to make an act of self-sacrifice.

In taking account of Austria it is even to-day an error to exclude the possibility of a hostile policy such as was pursued by Thugut, Schwarzenberg, Buol, Bach, and Beust. May not the policy which made ingratitude a duty, the policy on which Schwarzenberg plumed himself in regard to Russia, be again pursued towards another Power? . . .

We cannot abandon Austria, but neither can we lose sight of the possibility that the policy of Vienna may willy-nilly abandon us.

In disclosing the existence of the Re-Insurance Treaty with Russia, and foretelling the present war, and the break-down of the Triple Alliance, in the *Hamburger Nachrichten* on January 24, 1892 (the full text will be found in another chapter of this book), Bismarck wrote:

No one can tell whether Austria's historic resentment will not reawaken and endeavour to find satisfaction at Germany's cost if the pressure of European events should weigh upon us. Notwithstanding her fidelity to treaty, Austria may be disinclined to bear the supremacy of the new German Empire.

Germany's defeat would mean Austria's annihilation. Germany's victory would make her a German vassal State. It seems not impossible that at the critical moment the allied Powers might approach Austria and offer her compensation for the losses which she is bound to suffer in the east and south, by giving Silesia back to her and joining the chiefly Roman Catholic South German States once more to the Dual Monarchy. Austria might recover the great position which she held in Germany and revenge herself upon Frederick the Great at the cost of William the Second. The present Emperor may have rashly destroyed not only the lifework of Bismarck but that of his great ancestor as well.

CHAPTER III

THE POLICY OF BISMARCK AND OF WILLIAM II [1]

Prince Otto Eduard Leopold von Bismarck, Germany's greatest son, was born on April 1, 1815, at Schönhausen. He died on July 30, 1898, at Friedrichsruh. Fate has its ironies. Apparently William the Second took the terrible decision which brought about the present war at a Council held at the Neues Palais in Potsdam on July 30, 1914, the anniversary of Bismarck's death; and the celebration of the centenary of Bismarck's birth has taken place in the turmoil of a war which seems likely to end in the destruction of Bismarck's life-work and of the Empire which he had laboriously created.

To the broad masses of the English-speaking people, and even to most well-informed men in this country, Prince Bismarck is an unknown and a sinister figure, a mysterious and terrible character, a man of blood and iron, Germany's evil genius, a statesman devoid of human feeling; who by diabolical cunning, unscrupulousness and violence, by the medieval methods of Machiavelli, united Germany; who imprinted his character deeply, and fatally, upon the new Empire, and forced it into a path which inevitably led to the present catastrophe. Those, however, who see in Bismarck a bloodthirsty and unscrupulous schemer of boundless ambition, who believe that the Iron Chancellor is responsible for the present war, and that William the

[1] From *The Nineteenth Century and After*, April 1915.

Second and his supporters have merely acted in accordance with Bismarck's teachings, are in error. The principal characteristic of Bismarck's foreign policy was not its daring and unscrupulousness, but its perfect sanity, one might almost say its wise moderation and its cautious restraint.

The present war is solely the work of William the Second and of his entourage. Had not the Emperor and his counsellors deliberately thrown to the winds Bismarck's pleadings for a sane policy and his unceasing admonitions, Germany would still be prosperous and at peace. Unfortunately, statesmanship is little studied in Great Britain. Bismarck, the statesman, is almost unknown even to those who are keenly interested in politics and who have adopted politics or diplomacy as a profession. This is the more to be regretted as Bismarck was probably not only the greatest diplomat but the greatest statesman, in the fullest sense of the word, of whom we know. In his social policy, economic policy, parliamentary policy, and in matters of organisation and administration he was a pioneer, and in all these he was probably as great as he was in the sphere of foreign policy. Unfortunately statesmanship, the greatest of all human sciences, is completely neglected at the Anglo-Saxon Universities in both hemispheres. If it were taught, as it ought to be, there would be chairs of Bismarckian statesmanship at every university.

The greatness of a statesman may be seen not by his eloquence and his parliamentary and electoral successes, but by his national achievements. Bismarck created an empire and made a nation. Measured by the positive success of his activity Bismarck was undoubtedly one of the greatest statesmen known to history. In 1862, when Bismarck became Prime Minister of Prussia, Germany was merely a geographical expression, and Prussia was a weak, poor, small, torn, and disunited State. It consisted of two disjointed halves, which were separated from one

another by the independent States of Hanover and Hesse. It had only 18,491,220 inhabitants. It had practically no merchant marine, no manufacturing industries, and very little wealth. The nation and its Government were in conflict. Austria dominated and domineered over Prussia. The country had been shaken to its foundations by the revolution of 1848. Another revolution seemed not impossible.

Civil strife was so acute, and the internal difficulties of Prussia were so great when William the First ascended the Prussian throne, that he had actually written out in his own hand his act of resignation. With difficulty Bismarck induced the despairing monarch to tear up that fatal document.

King and Parliament were in deadly conflict. Kingship had fallen so low in public esteem that, as Bismarck has told us, scarcely anyone raised his hat to the King in Berlin except a couple of Court hairdressers. Such was the position when Bismarck took office. He resolved to break the power of the pugnacious Prussian Parliament, to strengthen to the utmost the authority and power of the Crown, to deprive Austria of her leadership, to conquer for weak and despised Prussia the supremacy in Germany and in Europe.

Bismarck is unique among statesmen. Gifted with marvellous foresight, he formed the full programme of his entire life-work as a comparatively young and quite inexperienced man, and was able to carry it out in every particular in the course of a long and laborious life. In manuscript notes written down in March 1854, and in a long memorandum sent to Otto von Manteuffel, the then Prime Minister of Prussia, on July 25, 1854, both of which are reprinted in vol. ii. of the 'Anhang zu den Gedanken und Erinnerungen von Otto Fürst von Bismarck,' we find laid down the complete policy which Bismarck pursued unswervingly to the day of his death. He then advocated, for instance, that Prussia should follow not a German

but a purely Prussian policy ; that she should make herself supreme in Germany, following, if necessary, an anti-Austrian policy ; that she should cut herself off from Austria, and should not support that country if the pursuit of her Balkan ambitions should involve the realm of the Hapsburgs in trouble with Russia.

As a young student, Bismarck, like many men of his time, dreamed of a United Germany. However, while the vast majority of Germans wished to unite all the German States and the States of Austria-Hungary in some loose form of federation, Bismarck aimed at creating a compact and purely German Germany, a great national and homogeneous State, under Prussia's leadership, expelling Austria out of Germany and leaving to the House of Hapsburg the rule of the alien nations, of the Slavs, Magyars, Roumanians, and Italians.

In the beginning of his official career Bismarck advocated the acquisition of Schleswig-Holstein with Kiel, desiring to make Prussia a seafaring and naval Power. He recommended the construction of the Baltic and North Sea Canal, and looked hopefully forward to a war with Napoleon the Third, who then dominated Europe, trusting that his overthrow would unite Germany and give to Prussia the hegemony in Germany and Europe.

Bismarck became Prime Minister of Prussia in 1862. Supported by the King, he immediately set to work to strengthen the Prussian Army immensely, for he wished to make Prussia independent and powerful with its help. As the Prussian Parliament absolutely refused to vote the large funds required, he governed for years without a Parliament and without a budget, collecting the taxes by force. Two years after, in 1864, supported by Austria, he made war upon Denmark, and took from that country Schleswig-Holstein and Kiel. At that time, Austro-Prussian co-operation was indispensable for achieving Bismarck's aims. As the two Germanic Powers seemed firmly united,

and as Russia and France were not ready for war, the States of Europe only protested against the seizure of the Danish territories, but did not intervene.

Austria had served Prussia well by enabling her to acquire the coveted Danish territories, but the defeat of the Dual Monarchy was required to make Prussia supreme in Germany and to give her the leadership of the other German States, the adherence of which would immensely strengthen her military power. The Austro-Prussian condominium in Schleswig-Holstein lent itself admirably to the production of the necessary *casus belli*. War was duly brought about in 1866. The Prussian people and their parliamentary representatives, who had dreamt of a Greater Germany, embracing Prussia, Austria, and all the smaller States, and who detested Bismarck as an enemy of liberalism and of representative government, protested passionately, but in vain, against the *Bruderkrieg*, the fratricidal war. Owing to the great increase of the Army, made against the will of the representatives of the people, Prussia had become exceedingly strong. She defeated Austria, and that country lost her supremacy both in Germany and in Italy. By arms Prussia had established her paramountcy in Germany.

Austria's defeat had freed Prussia from Austria's leadership, had made her independent, had greatly increased her power and prestige, and had loosely attached to Prussia the Central and South German States, who naturally inclined towards the victor. To weld Prussia and the South German States into a firmly united body, to give Prussia for all time the leadership in Germany, and to reconquer the formerly German Alsace-Lorraine, Bismarck required a successful war with France, the hereditary enemy. He clearly recognised that only a victory over France could arouse among all the German States and peoples an enthusiasm sufficiently strong to overcome the petty jealousies which had divided Germany since the dawn of her history.

In six years, from 1864 to 1870, Prussia had, under Bismarck's leadership, fought three most successful wars. She had acquired free access to the sea. She had created an organic connection between the detached eastern and western halves of the Monarchy by incorporating Hanover and Hesse as a result of the war of 1866. She had acquired vast German territories, and had firmly joined to herself the purely German South German States. She had reconquered Alsace-Lorraine, and had won for the King of Prussia the Imperial Crown. Thus, Bismarck had at the same time made Prussia great, had united Germany, and had firmly established the authority of the King. He had achieved all this against the will of the people and against that of the most influential circles. Even the King himself had always to be persuaded and convinced, cajoled and threatened, to follow Bismarck's lead.

Government against the will of the people, as carried on by Bismarck, had proved marvellously successful. The King-Emperor was given the full credit of Bismarck's achievements. Hence, Bismarck's successes had steadily increased the authority of the monarch. The people had been taught to trust their rulers blindly and unquestioningly, and to treat their shortsighted parliamentary representatives almost with contempt. The belief in authority among the people was greatly strengthened by a patriotic education in the elementary schools, and by making the formerly free universities of Germany and the Press instruments of the Government and of the Imperial will. Thus, the liberal and democratic Germany of former times was destroyed.

Having created Prusso-Germany's greatness, Bismarck wished to establish the country's security for all time. By an economic policy which at the same time was wise and daring, he created a wonderful system of State railways, and a powerful and efficient merchant marine. He converted Germany from a poor and almost purely agricultural

State into a wealthy industrial country. He introduced a system of State Insurance which has been copied by many countries, and secured Germany's position among the Powers by the most wonderful system of alliances which the world has seen.

By sparing Austria after her defeat of 1866, Bismarck made possible her reconciliation with Germany. By placing the Dual Monarchy into opposition with Russia at the time of the Russo-Turkish War, he raised the spectre of a Russo-Austrian War. It alarmed Vienna very greatly, and made an Austro-German Alliance not only possible but necessary.

Fearing the abiding resentment and hostility of defeated and humiliated France, Bismarck wished to isolate that country. The German-Austrian Alliance did not seem to afford a sufficient guarantee against the formation of an anti-German coalition, in which France would, of course, be the moving spirit.

To alienate France and Italy, Bismarck gave to France at the Congress of Berlin Tunis, to which Italy had by far the stronger claim, and thus he involved these two countries in bitter hostility, and a ten years' Customs war. He prompted France to acquire colonies in opposition to England, and at the same time encouraged England to occupy Egypt, to the possession of which France considered herself entitled. Thus, he estranged France and England. Furthermore, England and Russia were made to quarrel over Constantinople and Asia.

France's hostility, combined with Austro-German pressure, forced Italy to join the German-Austrian Alliance. The Triple Alliance was created. Germany could rely on the support of two Great Powers, while France, Russia, and England were isolated. Germany's security seemed throughly established. Nevertheless, Bismarck still feared the formation of a coalition hostile to Germany. It is true the Triple Alliance was a purely defensive instrument.

Still, Russia might conceivably feel threatened by that combination and endeavour to protect herself by a counter-alliance with France, Germany's natural enemy.

To prevent Russia and France combining, Bismarck not only demonstrated to Russia Germany's sincere friendship whenever an opportunity offered, but he concluded with that country a secret but purely defensive alliance which assured Russia that Germany would not aid Austria-Hungary if that country should attack Russia, but, on the contrary, observe towards Russia an attitude of benevolent neutrality. The two treaties completely shackled Austria's freedom of action, and tied that country to the German car of State. They made Austria-Hungary a junior partner in the Alliance. With the two alternative Alliances Bismarck could always play off Austria-Hungary against Russia, or Russia against Austria-Hungary. The initiative in the Triple Alliance was reserved to Germany.

As England was hard pressed by France in Africa, and by Russia in Asia, she naturally inclined towards Germany, and would probably have assisted that country in a war with France and Russia. She was considered to be an unofficial, a semi-detached, member of the Triple Alliance. In addition, Roumania, ruled by a Hohenzollern Prince, was attached to the Triple Alliance by a secret treaty, and Turkey could be relied upon to support Germany against Russia in time of need. As Russia and England were friendly to Germany, France was isolated and unable to find an ally. By this wonderful system of alliances, concluded with all the important European nations, which were encouraged to quarrel among themselves, Bismarck dominated and directed all Europe. An anti-German coalition was unthinkable. Germany ruled Europe.

Bismarck pursued not an ambitious policy of domination, but a purely nationalist and a conservative policy. He did not aim at ruling the world. The wars which he had brought about were in truth wars of nationality. They were under-

taken solely for the purpose of uniting the divided German nation. They were means to an end, and they were necessary for Germany's unification. Ever since his youth, Bismarck had wished to see all Germans, except the Roman Catholic Austro-Germans, united in a single State, ruled by the Hohenzollerns. In 1871 he had achieved his ideal. When, by three successful wars, he had accomplished his aim, he considered his work completed. He had created a great German Empire, and he desired the new Empire to keep the peace and to remain a purely German State. Ever since 1871 Bismarck strove to avoid war. It has often been asserted, but it has not been sufficiently proved, that Bismarck intended to attack France in 1875. He denied that intention to the day of his death, unceasingly condemning wars of ambition or precaution, such as that brought about by William the Second.

The future historians of Germany may tell their readers that Bismarck created the German Empire and that William the Second destroyed it. It seems exceedingly strange that Bismarck's successors proved unable to continue Bismarck's work, for their task was simple and easy. At the time when the Iron Chancellor was dismissed the position of the German Empire was impregnable. The Triple Alliance was a rock of strength, and as Austria was kept in check by the German-Russian secret treaty of alliance Berlin retained the initiative. England, Russia, Turkey, and Roumania were firm friends of Germany, and were likely to support that country in case of need. Isolated France was Germany's only enemy.

It is true Bismarck had no great successor. He has often been reproached for not having trained a statesman to take his place. However, great statesmen, like great poets, are born, not made. Besides, Germany no longer required a great statesman to continue Bismarck's work, for that far-seeing statesman had left to his successors the fullest and the most detailed instructions for their guidance.

His policy, like that of every truly great statesman, was distinguished by its simplicity and by its absence of secrecy. No statesman has ever taken his contemporaries more freely and more fully into his confidence than has Prince Bismarck. He laid his policy open to all Germany, and the Germans showed their gratitude and admiration for the founder of the Empire by publishing in full Bismarck's innumerable speeches and addresses, despatches, State papers, newspaper articles, confidential and private correspondence, and his conversations and table-talk in many hundreds of volumes. Modern Germany gave itself over to a veritable Bismarck cult. The Bismarck literature of Germany is about as copious as is the Napoleonic literature of France. Bismarck's views on every subject and on every question were studied, not merely by the elect, but by the masses. His 'Memoirs,' his political testament, were and are probably as widely read and as frequently quoted in Germany as the Bible and Goethe's 'Faust.'

Under Bismarck's guidance Germany had grown great by three victorious wars. Having created Germany's unity and firmly established the State, Bismarck desired to establish its permanence and security by pursuing a peaceful, prudent, moderate and conciliatory foreign policy, rightly fearing that a policy of dash and adventure, of interference, provocation and bluster, would raise dangerous enemies to the new State. In one of the concluding chapters of his 'Memoirs,' his political testament, that great statesman laid down on large lines the policy which Germany ought to pursue in the future, in the following phrases :—

In the future not only sufficient military equipment, but also a correct political eye, will be required to guide the German ship of State through the currents of coalition to which, in consequence of our geographical position and our previous history, we are exposed. . . .

We ought to do all we can to weaken the bad feeling among the nations, which has been called forth through our

growth to the position of a real Great Power, by honourable and peaceful use of our influence, and so convince the world that a German hegemony in Europe is more useful and less partizan, and also less harmful to the freedom of other nations, than would be the hegemony of France, Russia or England. . . .

In order to produce this confidence, it is above everything necessary that we should act honourably and openly, and be easily reconciled in case of friction or untoward events.

William the Second came to the throne on June 15, 1888. He disagreed with Bismarck on important questions of domestic and foreign policy. He dismissed the founder of Modern Germany on March 22, 1890. After his dismissal, Bismarck watched with concern and anxiety the unceasing, reckless, and neurotic activity of the young Emperor. He feared that the youthful monarch, encouraged by Court flatterers, place-hunters, and adventurers, might endanger, or even destroy, the newly created Empire, and deep pessimism took hold of him. Hoping to save his country, Bismarck devoted the remaining eight years of his life entirely to political teaching. He laid down the principles of his foreign and domestic policy in a large number of newspaper articles and speeches, he criticised freely and fearlessly the mistakes of his successors, and he gave to his country the essence of his statesmanship, the *arcana imperii*, in his 'Gedanken und Erinnerungen,' his 'Memoirs,' which may be found in every German house.

Bismarck's pessimism as to Germany's future, which impressed numerous Germans who paid him homage in his retirement, was chiefly caused by the unstable, rash, overweening and domineering character of William the Second, by his vanity and by his susceptibility to flattery. I have already quoted in this book the following two paragraphs from Bismarck's 'Memoirs,' obviously comparing William the Second with his grandfather, but they will bear repetition :

The Emperor William I was completely free from vanity of this kind ; on the other hand, he had in a high degree a peculiar fear of the legitimate criticism of his contemporaries and of posterity. . . . No one would have dared to flatter him openly to his face. In his feeling of royal dignity, he would have thought ' If anyone has the right of praising me to my face, he has also the right of blaming me to my face.' He would not admit either. . . .

What I fear is that by following the road in which we are walking our future will be sacrificed to the impulses of the moment. Former rulers looked more to the capacity than the obedience of their advisers ; if obedience alone is the qualification, then demands will be made on the general ability of the monarch which even a Frederick the Great could not satisfy, although in his time politics, both in war and peace, were less difficult than they are to-day.

Referring to the misrule of former Prussian kings, Bismarck significantly wrote in his ' Memoirs ' :

In an absolute monarchy no one except the sovereign can be proved to have any definite share of responsibility for its policy. If the King comes to any unfortunate decisions, no one can judge whether they are due to his own will or to the influence which various personalities of male and female gender—aides-de-camp, courtiers and political intriguers, flatterers, chatterboxes, and tell-tales—may have upon the monarch. In the last resort the royal signature covers everything ; how it has been obtained no one ever knows.

William the Second dismissed Bismarck because he thought his own policy wiser than that of his experienced Chancellor. Believing himself a genius, he wished to be his own Chancellor. He had no use for statesmen, for men of genius and of character such as Bismarck, but only for time-serving nonentities, for men without backbone, who were ready to execute without question the Imperial will

and every Imperial whim, regardless of the consequences to the country. On July 1, 1897, Bismarck commented on the impending retirement of Herr Marschall von Bieberstein from the German Foreign Office. He discreetly pointed out that not Herr von Marschall, but the Emperor himself was to blame for the mistakes of Germany's foreign policy made since Bismarck's dismissal. He wrote in the *Hamburger Nachrichten :*

A number of papers, especially the *Kölnische Zeitung*, give a good character to Herr von Marschall at the occasion of his impending resignation. . . .

We have not noticed that Herr von Marschall has been guided by any political views and principles of his own in carrying out the Imperial orders. We are convinced that he possessed certain principles when he entered the Foreign Office, but we do not believe that he had any opportunity to apply them during his seven years of office. We believe that he has merely done his official duties by carrying out the instructions which he received from the Imperial Chancellor on behalf of the Emperor. . . .

We do not intend to criticise Germany's policy during the last seven years, but we should be acting unjustly in holding him responsible for that policy. We consider that he had no part in shaping it, that he merely did what he was told.

William the Second has made numerous absolute pronouncements, such as 'You Germans have only one will, and that is My will; there is only one law, and that is My law.' '*Sic volo, sic jubeo.*' 'Only one master in this country. That is I, and who opposes Me I shall crush to pieces.' Like another Louis the Fourteenth, William the Second taught the people '*L'état c'est moi.*' Bismarck dreaded the Emperor's inclination towards absolutism. He considered his recklessness to be doubly dangerous in view of the great power possessed by the monarch, and the abject flattery and servility prevailing in German Court

circles, on the one hand, and in view of the extreme docility of the well-drilled German nation on the other. Hence, Bismarck strove with all his might to create a counterpoise to the Emperor in an enlightened public opinion, in an independent Parliament, and in frank public criticism of the Emperor's policy. He wrote in his 'Memoirs':

Absolutism would be the ideal form of Government for a European State were not the King and his officials as other men to whom it is not given to reign with superhuman wisdom, insight, and justice. The most experienced and well-meaning absolute rulers are subject to human imperfections, such as an over-estimation of their own wisdom, the influence and eloquence of favourites, not to mention petticoat influences, both legitimate and illegitimate. Monarchy and the most ideal monarch, if in his idealism he is not to be a common danger, stand in need of criticism; the thorns of criticism set him right when he runs the risk of losing his way.

Criticism can only be exercised through the medium of a free Press and of Parliaments in the modern sense of the term.

After his dismissal, Bismarck settled in Friedrichsruh, his country seat, close to Hamburg, and the *Hamburger Nachrichten* became the principal organ in which he stated his views, in numerous anonymous articles which betray his authorship by their style. They will be found collected in the seven-volume work of Penzler, and in the two-volume work of Hermann Hofmann, two journalists who edited them, and in the publications of Poschinger, Horst Kohl, Liman, Blum, and other writers on Bismarck. It should be added that the vast majority of the extracts given in this chapter have not been published in the English language. Their authenticity may be seen by the fact that Bismarck did not repudiate their authorship when, during his lifetime, they were collected and published by Penzler and described as articles emanating from the great Chancellor.

In the *Hamburger Nachrichten* of November 24, 1891, Bismarck commented severely on the Emperor's pronouncement '*Suprema lex regis voluntas.*' He contrasted it with his first speech from the throne, on June 27, 1888, in which the Emperor had promised that he would maintain the existing constitution, and had stated that he was satisfied with his position as established by it.

On December 11, 1891, Bismarck received the editor of the *Eisenbahn Zeitung.* Referring to the Emperor's pronouncement '*Sic volo, sic jubeo,*' he told the journalist that he saw Germany's salvation in the possession of a strong monarchy and of a Parliament which defended the rights of the people. On the following day, December 12, 1891, receiving a deputation of the town of Siegen, Bismarck said :

The most disquieting feature for me is that the Reichstag has abdicated its position. We suffer everywhere from the bureaucracy. . . . The Reichstag is the indispensable cement of Germany's national unity. If its authority declines, the bonds which hold Germany together are weakened.

On July 24, 1892, Bismarck, addressing a South German deputation at Kissingen, said :

I would have gladly continued my work, but our young Emperor will do everything himself. . . . The German Reichstag is the focus of our national life. To strengthen the Reichstag, the responsibility of Ministers should be increased. Anyone can become Imperial Chancellor, whether he is fitted for the office or not, and the Chancellor's post may be abused to such an extent that he becomes a mere secretary, and that his responsibility is limited to executing the orders he receives. . . . If ministerial responsibility were established by law, a man who does not possess the necessary qualifications would not take office. . . .

When I became Minister, the Crown was threatened by the people. The King was discouraged because he could no

longer rely on his Ministers, and he wished to abdicate. Hence I strove to strengthen the Crown against Parliament. Perhaps I have gone too far in that direction. We now require a balance of power within Germany, and I believe that free criticism is indispensable to the monarchy. Otherwise we fall a prey to official absolutism. We require the bracing air of public criticism. Our entire constitution is based on it. If Parliament becomes powerless, becomes a mere tool in the hands of the Government, we return to the régime of absolutism.

Bismarck was particularly dismayed at the Emperor's unceasing and exasperating interference in foreign politics which threatened to create everywhere enemies to Germany. On July 30, 1892, he stated in his speech at Jena that in foreign policy the most important thing was not activity but patience, and he attributed much of his success to the fact that he had learned patience when stalking deer or fishing. Continuing, he said:

The basis of a constitutional monarchy is the co-operation of the monarchical will with the convictions of the governed people. . . .

It is a dangerous experiment nowadays to strive after absolutism in the centre of Europe. Henceforward we must aim at strengthening independent political thought and political conviction in our Parliament and among the German people. . . .

The wars which united Germany were necessary, but there is no need for further wars. Our wishes are fulfilled. We should be frivolous or clumsy if we allowed ourselves to be involved in further wars without need. If we follow a conservative policy we shall be able to hold our own against all comers, although we are in the centre of Europe. Germany cannot conduct aggressive cabinet wars. Besides, a nation which can be forced into such wars does not possess the right constitution. . . .

Since 1870 we have avoided further wars and have striven to strengthen Germany. In building up the empire some

kind of dictatorship was necessary, but that cannot be considered as a permanent feature. Our task can be completed only when Germany possesses a powerful Parliament which embodies our sense of unity.

As Bismarck's appeals to the German Parliament and to the German people to assert themselves proved fruitless, he endeavoured to find a counterpoise to the Emperor in the minor States of Germany, which are represented in the Federal Council. He wrote, on June 11, 1897, in the *Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten:*

According to Article 8 of the German Constitution, there exists within the Federal Council a committee on foreign affairs, formed by representatives of the Kingdoms of Bavaria, Saxony, and Würtemberg, and by two representatives elected by the other Federal States. That Committee is entitled to demand information from the Government regarding diplomatic affairs. Formerly, a meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Federal Council was of the greatest rarity. Prince Bismarck guided Germany's foreign policy, and no one felt the necessity of controlling him. Now matters are different.

Although we do not wish to criticise the achievements of Prince Hohenlohe or Herr Marschall von Bieberstein, we feel that it is necessary to remind the country of the existence of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Federal Council. We are of opinion that the German people are entitled to know the character of the 'changes' which have taken place in the relations between Vienna and Berlin, about which inspired Austrian papers have been writing, and we hope that these 'changes' have not taken place at Germany's cost, that they will neither lead to Germany's isolation nor to Germany's dependence upon Austria and Russia.

The watchword of modern Germany is 'Machtpolitik.' Unrestrained violence is advocated as a policy. During recent years, and especially since Bismarck's death, many leading Germans have advocated a ruthless policy devoid

of morality and based exclusively on brute force. Modern Germany has paid lip-worship to Bismarck, but has disregarded his teachings, for that great statesman endeavoured, in the main, to follow an honest, moderate, and straightforward policy, and he attached the greatest value to political morality. On July 21, 1893, addressing a thousand people from Brunswick, Bismarck said :

The possession of moral authority is a very important factor in political life. To avoid wars, something more is needed than the possession of a powerful army. I attach value to the respect and the prestige which Germany enjoys among the non-German nations. Respect and prestige are desirable not merely to satisfy national vanity and ambition. They are valuable and extremely useful assets which carry with them great advantages, and we suffer when Germany's prestige and respect are diminished.

Contemplating with concern the Chauvinistic tendencies which had become noticeable in Germany under the government of William the Second, Bismarck, after his retirement, unceasingly urged that Germany should follow a policy of peace, of moderation, of good faith, and of good fellowship towards other nations. He wrote in his ' Memoirs ' :

We ought to do all we can to weaken the bad feeling which has been called forth through our growth to the position of a real Great Power by the honourable and peaceful use of our influence, and so convince the world that a German hegemony in Europe is more useful and less partisan, and also less harmful for the freedom of others, than would be the hegemony of France, Russia, or England.

It has always been my ideal aim, after we had established our unity within the possible limits, to win the confidence not only of the smaller European States, but also of the Great Powers, and to convince them that German policy will be just and peaceful now that it has repaired the *injuria temporum*, the disintegration of the nation. In order to produce this confidence it is above everything necessary

that we should be honourable, open, and easily reconciled in case of friction or *untoward events*.

In most cases an open and honourable policy succeeds better than the subtlety of earlier ages.

Advocating a peaceful, honourable, and straightforward policy, Bismarck was absolutely opposed to unnecessary wars, and especially to preventive wars. Hence, he would not allow the military men, who easily incline towards war, to exercise any influence upon statesmanship. He wrote in his 'Memoirs':

Even victorious wars cannot be justified unless they are forced upon one. Besides, one cannot read the cards of Providence far enough ahead to anticipate historical development and make one's own calculations accordingly. It is natural that in the staff of the army not only young, active officers, but experienced strategists also should feel the need of turning to account the efficiency of their troops and their own capacity to lead, and should wish to make themselves renowned in history. It would be a matter of regret if that feeling did not exist in the army. However, the task of keeping that feeling within such limits as the nation's need of peace can justly claim is the duty of the political, not the military, heads of the State.

That feeling becomes dangerous only under a monarch whose policy lacks sense of proportion and power to resist one-sided and constitutionally unjustifiable influences.

How peaceful Bismarck's views were may be seen from the following New Year article which appeared in the *Münchener Allgemeine Zeitung* on January 4, 1892. We read:

The indisputable predominance of Germany in European policy from the end of the Franco-German War to the end of the 'eighties was due, before all, to the superiority of the German army and to the great personal prestige and influence enjoyed by the Emperor William I and Prince Bismarck. Since then other nations have increased their readiness for

war, and since the disappearance of the old Emperor and of his Chancellor, Germany's authoritative position has naturally diminished, for only fresh successes can give Germany that prestige and influence which she acquired in the times of these men. However, successes similar to those achieved in the time of William I do not often recur.

The German Empire, as left by its founders, does not require new foreign wars, for nothing can be gained by them. On the contrary, Germany's principal aim must be to increase its internal strength, so that the Empire may be able to weather future storms. In the time of William I it was necessary to bring about appeals to arms, because the foundations of Germany's national life had to be laid. Now it is Germany's task to avoid these decisions as far as possible, for by war nothing can be gained, and only that which has been won can be lost. That has been Prince Bismarck's leading political idea ever since the Peace of Frankfort in 1871. . . .

In entering upon the New Year we express the wish that German statesmanship may not abandon the fundamental directions which have been laid down for its guidance, that Germany may, at least in the domain of foreign policy, continue to pursue the old course.

After dismissing Bismarck, William the Second announced to the world that he would henceforth steer the ship of State over a new course, and that he would lead Germany towards a great and glorious future. Filled with anxiety lest the reckless ambition of the Emperor would involve the young Empire in unnecessary and perilous wars, Bismarck wrote, in a series of articles published in the *Münchener Allgemeine Zeitung* between May 12 and 18, 1892:

Prince Bismarck had created Germany on a broad national basis. When that task had been fulfilled he and his successors had only to preserve Germany's position, the creation of which had demanded such heavy sacrifices. This being his fundamental maxim, it was necessary for

Germany to be as strong as possible. At the same time, it was necessary to avoid, as long as possible, all appeals to arms in which Germany could win nothing, but could only lose. His leading view was that every extension of territory beyond the limits of 1871 would be a misfortune. . . .

Bismarck's entire foreign policy culminated in the idea of isolating France and of placing the new frontiers which he had given to Europe under the protection of all the other Powers. . . .

Germany's position and activity will always largely depend upon her Allies. On the day when the leading German statesmen have to decide on peace or war they should inquire conscientiously whether the prize is worthy the sacrifice, and whether the desired result cannot be equally well obtained without a war, the issue of which no one can guarantee. War is made only for the sake of peace. It is made only in order to obtain those conditions in which we wish to live with our opponent when the war is over. . . .

Is it really necessary to pursue a new course ? The new pilot is, perhaps, not able to steer the German ship of State with the knowledge and determination of his predecessor, but is it therefore necessary to abandon altogether the course that had been steered in the past ?

Wishing to avoid unnecessary and ruinous wars, Bismarck desired before all to avoid a war with Russia, Germany's traditional ally, who had saved Prussia from extinction in the time of Napoleon, and who had supported her in the wars of 1866 and 1870, and had thus enabled Germany to achieve her national unity. Besides, Germany and Russia had no conflicting interests, and neither Power had reason to covet any territory possessed by the other.

Desiring that Germany should develop in peace, and fearing the possibility of a hostile attack, Bismarck had concluded a purely defensive alliance with Austria-Hungary and Italy. It seemed, therefore, not likely that Russia would attack either Germany or Austria. Hence a war with Russia seemed to be possible only if an Austro-

Russian quarrel should break out about the Balkan Peninsula and if Austria was the aggressor.

Bismarck was determined that Germany should not be drawn unnecessarily into a purely Austrian quarrel. Hence he had concluded with Russia a secret defensive Treaty which, as has previously been stated, assured that country of Germany's benevolent neutrality in the event of an Austrian attack.

As long as Russia felt sure of Germany's benevolent neutrality if attacked by Austria, she had no cause to ally herself with France. Thus France remained isolated, and Austria could not venture to attack Russia unless with Berlin's approval. Hence she was compelled to be guided in her Balkan policy by Germany. If, on the other hand, Russo-German relations should become bad, it was clear that Russia would turn to France for support, and that Austria would be able to drag Germany into her Balkan adventures. Bismarck wrote in his 'Memoirs':

> After the conclusion of our defensive alliance with Austria I considered it as necessary to cultivate neighbourly relations with Russia as before. . . .
>
> If, however, Germany should quarrel with Russia, if an irremediable estrangement should take place between the two countries, Austria would certainly begin to enlarge her claims to the services of her German ally, first by insisting on an extension of the *casus foederis*, which so far, according to the published text, provides only for the measures necessary to repel a Russian attack upon Austria; then by requiring the *casus foederis* to be replaced by some provision safeguarding the Austrian interests in the Balkans and the East, an idea to which the Press has already succeeded in giving practical shape.
>
> The wants and the plans of the inhabitants of the basin of the Danube naturally reach far beyond the present limits of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The German Imperial Constitution points out the way by which Austria may advance and reconcile her political and material interests, so

far as they lie between the eastern frontier of the Roumanian population and the Gulf of Cattaro. It is, however, no part of the policy of the German Empire to lend its subjects, and to expend their blood and treasure, for the purpose of realising the designs of a neighbouring Power.

In the interest of the European political equilibrium the maintenance of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy as a strong independent Great Power is for Germany an object for which she might, in case of need, stake her own peace with a good conscience. But Vienna should abstain from going outside this security, and should not deduce from the alliance claims which it was not concluded to support. . . .

After Bismarck's dismissal the defensive Russo-German Treaty, the so-called Re-Insurance Treaty, was not renewed. Prince Hohenlohe wrote in his diary on March 31, 1890 :

It seems more and more clear that differences regarding Russia between the Emperor and Bismarck have brought about the breach. Bismarck intended to leave Austria in the lurch, while the Emperor wished to support Austria, even if his policy should involve him in war with Russia and France. That is made plain by Bismarck's words that the Emperor carried on his policy like Frederick William the Fourth. Herein lies the danger of the future.

In another part of his ' Memoirs,' Prince Hohenlohe wrote that the Emperor's refusal to renew the Russo-German Treaty was the principal cause of Bismarck's dismissal.

The old Emperor was so strongly convinced of the necessity of Germany keeping peace with Russia that on his death-bed, addressing William the Second, he said, according to Bismarck : ' Thou must always keep in touch with the Russian Emperor ; there no conflict is necessary.' These were some of his last words.

Bismarck had been dismissed largely because the Emperor wished to reverse Bismarck's policy towards Russia and Austria-Hungary. Foreseeing that a discontinuance of the Russo-German Treaty would ultimately,

and almost inevitably, involve Germany in an Austro-Russian war about the Balkans, where Germany had no direct interests, Bismarck wrote in the *Hamburger Nachrichten* on April 26, 1890, only five weeks after his dismissal:

Austria cannot hope to obtain Germany's support for promoting her ambitious plans in the Balkan Peninsula. These Austrian plans have never been encouraged by Germany as long as Germany's foreign policy was directed by Prince Bismarck. On the contrary, the Prince has, at every opportunity, particularly at the time of the Bulgarian incident, shown with the utmost clearness that he is very far from wishing to promote Austria's special interests in the Balkans in antagonism to Russia. Such a policy would not be in harmony with the stipulations of the Triple Alliance. That Alliance views only the *damnum emergens*, not the *lucrum cessans*, of the signatory Powers.

Least of all is it Germany's business to support Austria's ambitions in the Balkan Peninsula. If such ambitions exist, and are to be promoted with the assistance of other nations, Austria-Hungary will have to address herself not to Germany, but to the nations interested in Balkan politics. These are all the Great Powers except Germany. They are (apart from Russia) England, France, and Italy. Austria can always arrive at an understanding with these Powers if she wishes to further her interests in the Balkans, and Germany need not concern herself about them. Germany's point of view is this: that she has no interests in Balkan affairs.

Five months later, on September 29, 1890, Bismarck renewed his warning in the *Hamburger Nachrichten*:

In the past, when the relations between Germany and Austria and between Germany and Russia were discussed, there were two points of danger: Firstly, that German policy—or, what would be worse, the German Army—should be placed at the disposal of purely Austrian interests in the Balkans against Russia; secondly, that Germany's

relations with Russia should be endangered and brought to the breaking-point by unnecessary Press attacks.

We have always warned against this twofold danger, but we have never advised a breach of treaty faith towards Austria. The Austro-German alliance does not demand that Germany should support Austria's Balkan interests against Russia. It only demands that Germany should assist Austria if her territories should be attacked by Russia. . . .

We attach the greatest value to the preservation of good and cordial relations between Germany and Russia. If Austria and Russia should differ, Germany can mediate most successfully if she is trusted in St. Petersburg. Besides, a breach with Russia would, according to our inmost conviction, make Germany dependent upon Austria. . . .

No one can object if Austria succeeds in her Balkan policy without a war with Russia which would demand enormous sacrifices in blood and treasure. The Balkans do not concern Germany. We are interested in the maintenance of peace, and we do not care how Austria and Russia arrange their spheres of interest in the Balkans. . . .

Being anxious that good relations should exist between Germany and Austria, and that Austria's power and position should be preserved, we have opposed mistaken views as to the scope of the Austro-German Treaty, and have endeavoured to show that that Treaty does not oblige Germany to support Austria in the Balkans.

Hinting at the so-called Re-Insurance Treaty with Russia which William the Second had refused to renew, under the provisions of which Germany was to support Russia in case of an unprovoked attack upon her by Austria, Bismarck wrote in the *Hamburger Nachrichten* of January 24, 1892:

The Austro-German Treaty of Alliance of 1879 contemplated, as far as Russia was concerned, only mutual defence against a possible attack. Hence Germany always pointed out in Vienna that the Austro-German Alliance protected only the Dual Monarchy itself, but not its Balkan policy,

against Russia. With regard to the Balkans, Germany had unceasingly advised Austria to find protection by means of a separate Treaty with the States interested in the Balkans, such as England and Italy. Relying on the unaggressive character of the Austro-German Treaty, Germany was always able to go hand in hand with Russia, and to influence Austria if the Eastern policy of that country seemed likely to take an undesirable turn.

This advantageous position, the maintenance of which made considerable claims upon the skill of Germany's diplomacy, was later on believed to be too complicated. Besides, personal misunderstandings [between the Emperor and the Czar] impaired the good relations between Berlin and St. Petersburg, and led to the Russo-French rapprochement. Thus the position has changed to Germany's disadvantage. Formerly it was in Germany's power to arrive at any moment at an understanding with Russia, in consequence of treaty arrangements which existed side by side with the Austro-German Treaty, but which exist no longer. In consequence of the estrangement between Germany and Russia, Austria has been enabled to exercise considerable pressure upon Germany.

Foretelling the present war and the breakdown of the Triple Alliance, Bismarck continued:

Apparently German statesmanship no longer observes a disinterested attitude in Eastern affairs. By following the path upon which she has entered, Germany is in danger of gradually becoming dependent upon Austria, and in the end she may have to pay with her blood and treasure for the Balkan policy of Vienna. In view of that possibility, it will be readily understood that Prince Bismarck again and ever again gave warning that Germany should not break with Russia. . . .

The change in the European situation to Germany's disadvantage cannot be excused by extolling the power of the Triple Alliance. Formerly the Triple Alliance existed as it does now, and its importance was increased by the fact that Germany had a free hand, directed it, and dominated

Europe. We fear that since then the strength of the Alliance has not increased. . . .

A crisis in Italy, a change of sovereign in Austria or the like may shake its foundations so greatly that in spite of all written engagements it will be impossible to maintain it. In that case Germany's position would become extremely serious, for in order not to become entirely isolated she would be compelled to follow Austria's policy in the Balkans without reserve. Germany might get into the leading-strings of another Power which, it is true, has accepted the new position of Germany. However, no one can tell whether Austria's historic resentment will not reawaken and endeavour to find satisfaction at Germany's cost if the fortune of war should no longer favour Germany or if the pressure of European events should weigh upon us. Notwithstanding her fidelity to treaty, Austria may be disinclined to bear the supremacy of the new German Empire.

Considering good relations between Russia and Germany absolutely essential for Germany's security, and desiring to bring about a renewal of the Russo-German Re-Insurance Treaty, Bismarck at last embarked upon a great Press campaign. He revealed to Germany and the world the fact that there had formerly existed a secret treaty with Russia in the plainest language in his celebrated article which appeared on October 24, 1896, in the *Hamburger Nachrichten*. We read in it :

Russo-German relations remained good until 1890. Up to that date both States were fully agreed that if one of them were attacked the other would observe a benevolent neutrality. For instance, if Germany were attacked by France she would be sure of Russia's benevolent neutrality, and Russia would be sure of Germany's benevolent neutrality if she was attacked without cause. That agreement has not been renewed since the time when Prince Bismarck left office, and if we are rightly informed about the occurrences which have taken place in Berlin it appears that the failure to renew the treaty was not due to Russia being dissatisfied at the

change of Chancellors. It was Count Caprivi who refused to renew the mutual insurance of Russia and Germany, although Russia was ready to renew it. As at the same time Germany pursued a philo-Polish policy, it was only natural that the Russian Government should ask itself: What can be the object of Prussia's Polish policy, which stands in flagrant opposition to the friendly relations established at the time of the Emperor William the First?

We need not mention other anti-Russian indications at the German Foreign Office. Caprivi's attitude in the general European policy and in Germany's Polish policy was such that Russia, notwithstanding her great power, had seriously to consider the future. During the Crimean War all Europe, Prussia excepted, had been hostile to Russia. We do not intend to assert that a similar position will return. Still, it is only natural if a powerful State like the Russian Empire says to itself: 'We must have at least one reliable Ally in Europe. Formerly we could reckon with the three Emperors Alliance. Afterwards we could depend upon the House of Hohenzollern. If, however, in times of difficulty, we should meet with an anti-Russian policy, we must endeavour to arrange for support elsewhere.' The Kronstadt meeting and the first rapprochement between Absolute Russia and Republican France was solely brought about by Caprivi's political mistakes. Hence, Russia was forced to find in France that security which of course her statesmen desired to obtain.

This article created an immense sensation not only in the entire German Press but in the Press of the world.

The Government-inspired Press accused Bismarck of high treason in divulging secrets of State, and threatened him with the public prosecutor and with imprisonment. The disclosure led to a prolonged Press campaign in the course of which Bismarck defended the Re-Insurance Treaty with great vigour in numerous articles. With wonderful energy Bismarck, who was then eighty-two years old, endeavoured once more to direct the policy of Europe with

his indefatigable pen. He not merely criticised Germany's foreign policy and pointed out the dangerous mistake which had been made in destroying the intimate relations which existed formerly between Russia and Germany; he endeavoured at the same time to bring about a re-grouping of the Powers and to create differences between Russia and France likely to destroy their recent intimacy. This may be seen from many articles of Bismarck's, published at the time in various journals.

In his 'Memoirs' Bismarck summarised his views as to the attitude of Russia and France in this blunt phrase: 'With France we shall never have peace; with Russia never the necessity for war, unless Liberal stupidities or dynastic blunders falsify the situation.'

'Dynastic blunders' have done what Liberal stupidities failed to achieve.

In his articles and in his 'Memoirs' Bismarck repeatedly pointed out that Austria-Hungary might not only abandon Germany in the hour of need, but, remembering the loss of Silesia to Prussia and the Battle of Königgrätz, turn against Germany.

Unceasingly Bismarck pointed out in the clearest language that Germany was under no obligation whatever to support Austria in the Balkans, and that, in case of serious Austro-Russian differences, such as those which arose in July 1914 about Serbia, Germany should not act as Austria's unconditional supporter but as a mediator between the two States. Bismarck wrote in the *Hamburger Nachrichten* on January 15, 1893:

> The Austro-German Treaty of Alliance provides only against an attack on Austrian and German territory on the part of Russia. Being thus limited, the possibility is excluded that the Treaty may serve Austria's special interests in the Balkans. The purpose of the Alliance is exclusively to prevent a Russian war of aggression. Its purpose is in no way to strengthen Austria in the pursuit of a purely Austrian

policy in the East. Germany has no interests in the East. Besides, if she supported Austria's Balkan policy she would defeat the purpose of the Treaty, which is to preserve the peace.

If Austria was entitled to the support of Germany's bayonets if engaged in the East, a collision with Russia would become probable. Hence the *casus foederis* is limited to the possibility of a Russian attack upon one of the two Allies. The task of Germany, as Austria's Ally, consists in acting as a mediator between the two Powers in case of differences in the Balkans. If Austria wishes to further her individual interests in the Balkans she must seek support not in Germany, but among those countries which are interested in the East—England, France, and Italy.

Bismarck spoke and wrote in vain. His shallow successors treated his advice with contempt. The great German statesman not only pointed out the mistake which the Emperor had made in breaking with Russia but he tried to recreate the intimate relations which formerly existed between Germany and Russia. His exertions proved unavailing, and he wrote despairingly in the *Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* in June 1892:

The worst that has happened under the Chancellorship of Caprivi is that all the threads connecting Germany with Russia were suddenly broken. The German Emperor tried to win over the Russians with amiable advances. However, busy intermediaries reported to him expressions from the Czar's entourage which proved that his intended visit to Russia would be politically unsuccessful. Then William the Second immediately went to England and concluded with England the Treaty relating to Zanzibar and Heligoland, and that anti-Russian demonstration was followed by his philo-Polish policy, which was hurtful to Russia. Germany's foreign policy could not have taken a more fatal step than to threaten Russia with the re-establishment of the Kingdom of Poland in case of a Russian defeat. That

was bound to lead to the Franco-Russian rapprochement and to Kronstadt.

Bismarck clearly recognised that the alliance between Italy and Austria was an unnatural one, and that Italy's fidelity to her two partners would depend partly on the character of Germany's policy, partly on England's relations with Germany. In view of Italy's long and exposed sea-border and of her vulnerability in case of an attack from the sea, Italy could obviously not be expected to support Germany and Austria if such support would involve her in hostilities with the strongest naval Power. For this reason, among others, Bismarck was anxious that Germany and England should be firm friends. He wrote in the *Hamburger Nachrichten* on June 13, 1890 :

The co-operation of Germany, Austria, and Italy threatens no one. The Triple Alliance does not involve dangers which would become fatal to the co-operation of these three States. On the contrary, the Alliance is designed to strengthen the peace of Europe. The *casus foederis* towards Russia arises only if Russia attacks the territory of one of the two Allies. This limitation deprives the Alliance of all aggressive tendencies, and excludes the possibility that it may serve the special interests of Austria in the Balkan Peninsula and thus threaten the preservation of peace. . . .

The Austro-Italian Alliance is not equally favourable. Between Austria and Italy there are unadjusted differences, which are to be found particularly on the side of Italy, such as the anti-Austrian aspirations of the Irredentists. Besides, the Italian Radicals are opposed to the Triple Alliance, and sympathise with France. . . .

In view of France's aspirations, Italy must be able to rely on the assistance of the English fleet, for the Triple Alliance cannot protect the Italian coasts. Hence, Italy has to think of England, and consideration of England may conceivably limit Italy's freedom of action. The maintenance of the present relations between Austria and Italy must be the principal care of the diplomats, especially as,

if Italy for some reason or other should abandon the Triple Alliance, the Austrian Army would be compelled to protect the Dual Monarchy against Italy. Hence it would no longer be able to fulfil Article 1 of its Alliance with Germany, according to which it should assist Germany ' with its entire armed power.' By the detachment of Italy, the Austro-German Alliance would militarily lose so much that its value would become very problematical. . . .

If we sum up the considerations developed we find that the present position is quite satisfactory. As long as Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy are united in the Triple Alliance, and as long as these three States may reckon on the assistance of the English sea-power, the peace of Europe will not be broken. We must take care that friendly relations between Austria and Italy and between Italy and England shall be maintained. Besides, we must see that the Triple Alliance is restricted to its original scope, and that it is not allowed to serve those special interests which have nothing to do with it. We therefore firmly trust that, as far as Germany is concerned, the ' old course ' will be preserved with particular care.

Bismarck died on July 30, 1898. We know from his speeches that he attached the greatest value to good relations between England and Germany, that he saw in England ' Germany's natural and traditional ally.'

The greater part of the German colonies was acquired by Bismarck. His principal care was to ensure Germany's security on the Continent of Europe, and he attached the greatest value to Great Britain's good will and support in view of the possibility of Continental complications. Considering Germany's Continental interests infinitely more important than her transoceanic ones, he absolutely refused to pursue a transmaritime and colonial policy in opposition to England, fearing that an anti-British policy would drive England into the arms of France and Russia. Even when diplomatic differences had arisen between the two countries, Bismarck wished to remain on cordial terms with Great

Britain. On March 2, 1884, for instance, he stated in the Reichstag with reference to an Anglo-German dispute:

I shall do everything in my power in order, *sine irâ et studio*, and in the most conciliatory manner, to settle this matter in accordance with that quiet and friendly intercourse which has at all times existed between England and Germany, a quiet and friendly intercourse, which is most natural because neither Power possesses vital interests which conflict with the vital interests of the other Power. I can see only an error in the opinion that England envies us our modest attempts at colonising.

He laid down at greater length his guiding principles in his intercourse with Great Britain on January 10, 1885, when he stated in the Reichstag:

The last speaker has told us that we must either abandon our colonial policy or increase our naval strength to such an extent that we need not fear any naval Power, or to speak more clearly, that our navy should rival that of England herself. However, even if we should succeed in building up a navy as strong as that of England, we should still have to fear an alliance of England and France. These Powers are stronger than any single Power in Europe is or ever can be. It follows that the policy indicated by the last speaker is one which should never be striven after.

I would also ask the last speaker not to make any attempts to disturb the peace between England and Germany or to diminish the confidence that peace between these two Powers will be maintained by hinting that some day we may find ourselves in an armed conflict with England. I absolutely deny that possibility. It does not exist, and all the questions which are at present being discussed between England and Germany are not of sufficient importance to justify a breach of the peace on either side of the North Sea. Besides, I really do not know what disputes could arise between England and Germany. There never have been disputes between the two countries. From my diplomatic experience, I cannot see any reasons which can make

hostilities possible between them, unless a cabinet of inconceivable character should be in power in England, a cabinet which neither exists nor which is ever likely to exist, and which criminally attacks us.

Four years later, on January 26, 1889, only a short time before his dismissal. he stated with reference to the Anglo-German Zanzibar dispute in the Reichstag:

I absolutely refuse to act towards the Sultan of Zanzibar in opposition to England. As soon as we have arrived at an understanding with England, we shall take the necessary measures in Zanzibar in agreement with that country. I do not intend either actively to oppose England or even to take note of those steps which subordinate British individuals have taken against us. In Zanzibar and in Samoa we act in perfect harmony with the British Government. We are marching hand in hand, and I am firmly resolved that our relations shall preserve their present character.

English colonial interests compete with ours in numerous places, and subordinate colonial officials are occasionally hostile to German interests. Nevertheless, we are acting in perfect unison with the British Government. We are absolutely united, and I am firmly resolved to preserve Anglo German harmony and to continue working in co-operation with that country.

The preservation of Anglo-German good-will is, after all, the most important thing. I see in England an old and traditional ally. No differences exist between England and Germany. I am not using a diplomatic term, if I speak of England as our ally. We have no alliance with England. However, I wish to remain in close contact with England also in colonial questions. The two nations have marched side by side during at least a hundred and fifty years, and if I should discover that we might lose touch with England I should act cautiously and endeavour to avoid losing England's good-will.

Modern Germany has erected to Bismarck countless statues. Bismarck's speeches, Bismarck's letters, and

Bismarck's memoirs have been printed in hundreds of thousands of copies, and they are found on the book-shelves of the German people by the side of Schiller and Goethe. But Modern Germany has forgotten, or she deliberately has disregarded, Bismarck's policy, and Bismarck's warnings.

Bismarck saw in England 'an old and traditional ally.' Hence he never thought an Anglo-German war possible. To him such a war was, as he said, unthinkable.

As long as the great Chancellor lived William the Second did not venture upon pursuing a violently anti-British policy which was bound to drive this country into the arms of France and Russia. Although William the Second was hostile to England, he was probably restrained by the fear of Bismarck's criticism during the Chancellor's lifetime. Soon after Bismarck's death William the Second began his naval campaign.

When Bismarck had closed his eyes a violent anti-British agitation, financed by Krupp and carried on by hundreds of generals and professors, was started throughout Germany, and in 1900 was published the great German Navy Bill, in the introduction of which we read the ominous and oft-quoted words: 'Germany requires a fleet of such strength that a war with the mightiest naval Power would jeopardise the supremacy of that Power.'

Bismarck had observed the Emperor's Anglophobia in its more modified form with alarm, fearing its effect upon Italy. He had written in a series of articles on the European situation, published in the *Münchener Allgemeine Zeitung* from May 12 to 18, 1892:

In discussing Anglophobia in Germany we must remember that the principal Anglophobe is supposed to be the Emperor William the Second, who was hostile to England not only as Crown Prince, but even during the first years of his rule.

England's attitude towards the Triple Alliance depends not upon the Heligoland Treaty, but on Italy. If England

is opposed to Germany we can never reckon upon Italy's help. . . .

The Austro-Hungarian Army is at Germany's disposal only if the Dual Monarchy does not require its use against Italy. Otherwise, one-half of the Austrian army would be lost to Germany. . . . Italy is therefore a very important factor in the Triple Alliance, even if she limits her action to abstaining from attacking Austria. . . .

The idea that Russia may make a surprise attack upon Germany is Utopian. Only moderate diplomatic skill on Germany's part is required to avoid a war with Russia for generations. The tension among the nations would be greatly diminished if we should succeed in recreating in leading Russian circles the faith in Germany's neighbourly honesty which has disappeared since Bismarck's resignation.

A Russian war is a calamity which must not be brought upon the population of the Eastern Provinces of Germany without pressing necessity. The seriousness of a Russo-German war is particularly great, because it would immediately lead to a Franco-German war, while, on the other hand, a Franco-German war need not lead to Russian intervention. Besides, the impossibility of obtaining adequate compensation for such a war must be borne in mind. What can Germany obtain from Russia? . . . At best she would obtain a second neighbour-State thirsting for revenge. Germany would be in an uncomfortable position created by her own rashness.

Bismarck did not consider England's support as a matter admitting of doubt. He reckoned upon it as a matter of course. Commenting upon an important colonial debate in the Reichstag, he wrote in the *Münchener Allgemeine Zeitung* on February 8, 1891:

The value of England's friendship consists in this: that in case of a war she protects the Italian coasts or, which is perhaps more uncertain, helps in protecting the German shores. By doing this, England would largely act in her own interest. . . .

Three days later he wrote in the *Hamburger Nachrichten*:

In decisive moments our co-operation with Italy would be influenced by England's attitude. The greater or lesser measure of good relations between England and Germany is not without influence upon Italy's policy, and it is certainly questionable how Germany's relations with Italy would shape themselves if Italy should no longer be in the position of being attached by an equal friendship to England and to Germany.

On May 19, 1892, he wrote in the *Hamburger Nachrichten*:

We have repeatedly had occasion to point out that Italy's faithfulness to the Triple Alliance depends largely upon the relations existing between England and that country. Italy cannot run the risk of being isolated in the Mediterranean, and of being defeated by France. Hence she must be certain of the protection of the English fleet in case of need.

The agitation for strengthening the German navy began in a mild way soon after William the Second came to the throne. Bismarck, observing that dangerous development with concern, warned Germany against frittering away her strength and competing on the sea with the French or English fleets. Addressing 3000 people from Schleswig-Holstein, Bismarck said on May 26, 1895:

I wished to acquire Schleswig-Holstein, because unless we had that province we could not hope to have a German fleet. It was a question of national dignity that in case of need Germany should be able to hold her own against a second-rate navy. Formerly we had no fleet. I should consider it an exaggeration for Germany to compete with the French or the English navy. However, we must be strong enough on the sea to be able to deal with those second-rate Powers which we cannot get at by land.

Two years later Bismarck warned Germany more emphatically against creating a fleet strong enough to challenge England. On September 4, 1897, Mr. Maximilian Harden published in the *Zukunft* the following pronouncement of Prince Bismarck:

The papers are discussing unceasingly whether the German fleet should be increased. Of course, all that is required in the opinion of sober-minded experts should be voted. I have never been in favour of a colonial policy of conquest similar to that pursued by France. As far as one can see, the most important thing for Germany is a strong and reliable army provided with the best weapons. I am of Moltke's opinion—that we shall have to fight on the Continent of Europe for the possession of colonies. We must beware of undue economy in naval matters, but we must also guard ourselves against fantastical plans which might cause us to quarrel with people who are important for our position in Europe. *Qui trop embrasse.* . . .

In December 1897 Bismarck stated his views on Germany's transmaritime policy as follows in the *Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten*:

The German Government should not embark on undertakings unless they are absolutely required, or at least justified, by the material interests of the State. . . . Nothing would be more strongly opposed to Germany's interests than to enter upon more or less daring and adventurous enterprises guided merely by the desire to have a finger in every pie, to flatter the vanity of the nation or to please the ambitions of those who rule it. To carry on a policy of prestige would be more in accordance with the French than the German character. In order to acquire prestige, France has gone to Algiers, Tunis, Mexico, and Madagascar. If Germany should ever follow a similar policy, she would not promote any German interests, but would endanger the welfare of the Empire and its position in Europe.

Bismarck clearly foresaw that by embarking recklessly

upon a policy of adventure in the colonial sphere, Germany might endanger her relations with Great Britain. Besides, he foresaw that by wresting Port Arthur from victorious Japan in company with Russia and France, and occupying Kiaochow, she might later on be exposed to Japan's hostility. He did not understand why Germany should have gone out of her way to drive Japan out of Port Arthur with the help of France and Russia. Therefore he wrote on May 7, 1895, in the *Hamburger Nachrichten*:

It appears that Japan, following the friendly advice of Germany, Russia, and France, has abandoned the Liao-tung Peninsula. Germany has no interest whether the district in question remains in China's possession or not. If she has nevertheless exerted pressure upon Japan she might have had reasons with which we are not acquainted. Possibly the policy made in Berlin may have been due to the persuasiveness of people who were in favour of a policy of prestige similar to that pursued in the time of Napoleon the Third.

If Germany's action at Tokio was intended to do a service to Russia, it might perhaps be approved of. However, Russia might have been supported by an attitude of benevolent neutrality without active interference. . . .

For the present we believe that Germany's initiative in East Asia was not timely, and we doubt whether that policy and the extraordinary change of attitude towards England can be justified. We cannot help fearing that Germany's initiative in East Asia is merely a symptom of a defect from which our foreign policy suffers: that it springs from the inability to sit still and wait. We do not see why it was necessary to run any risks. . . .

Germany's action has diminished the sympathies for Germany which hitherto existed in Japan. That loss was perhaps unnecessary. The loss incurred on the one side may perhaps be balanced by gains, but only the future can show whether there are any gains.

Reverting to Germany's East Asiatic policy, Bismarck

wrote in the *Hamburger Nachrichten* on May 23, 1895:

Germany's action against Japan can only be explained by a desire to regain good relations with Russia, which have lately been lost. If that is the case, the Government should be careful not to fall between two stools. Russia desires to obtain ice-free harbours in the East, and Germany has no reason either to support or to oppose her. During decades we have endeavoured to encourage France to develop and expand in every direction—except in that of Alsace-Lorraine. We have encouraged her to expand in Tunis, in India, and in Africa, and we have a similar interest as regards Russia in the East. Germany has little interest in the Black Sea, but still less in the Sea of Japan. . . .

As we said before, we do not know the intentions of the Government, but we can only recommend that Germany, after having once more grasped Russia's hand, should hold it firmly and stand by Russia as long as Germany's own interests are not hurt thereby. If the contrary policy is followed, the result would be that we should offend Russia as much as we have already offended Japan by our interference.

Bismarck gave two most impressive warnings regarding mistakes in foreign policy in general and regarding a German attack on France, such as that which took place in 1914, in particular. In chapter xxviii of his 'Memoirs' the great statesman wrote:

Errors in the policy of the cabinets of the Great Powers bring no immediate punishment, either in St. Petersburg or in Berlin, but they are never harmless. The logic of history is even more exact in its revisions than the chief Audit Office of Prussia.

In chapter xxix, entitled 'The Triple Alliance,' Bismarck wrote regarding a German attack upon France:

It is explicable that for Russian policy there is a limit beyond which the importance of France must not be diminished. That limit was reached, I believe, at the Peace of

Frankfort, a fact which, in 1870 and 1871, was not so completely realised at St. Petersburg as five years later. I hardly think that during the Franco-German War the Russian Cabinet clearly foresaw that, when it was over, Russia would have for neighbour so strong and so united a Germany.

Bismarck was a most loyal citizen. He never endeavoured to revenge himself on the Emperor for the disgraceful way in which he was dismissed, and for the persecution which, after his dismissal, he suffered at the hands of the bureaucracy, no doubt by the Emperor's orders. Although he distrusted the Emperor's reckless and adventurous personal policy, he never attacked him or reproached him personally. He merely criticised his advisers and their action, and laid down the broad principles of Germany's policy in his posthumous 'Memoirs' and in numerous speeches and articles.

Bismarck's worst fears have been realised. The German nation, as I stated before, has paid lip-service to Bismarck, but has utterly disregarded his warnings and advice. William the Second and his courtier-statesmen have apparently destroyed Bismarck's creation. They cannot plead that they were not warned, for Bismarck foretold unceasingly that the Emperor's rash interference would lead to the break-up of the Triple Alliance, make Germany subservient to Austria-Hungary, involve her in war with Russia about the Balkan Peninsula where Germany possesses no interests, detach Italy, bring about Japan's hostility, and end in Germany's isolation in Europe.

The official and non-official spokesmen of Germany have asserted unceasingly that a world conspiracy had been formed against their country, that Russia, or England, is to blame for the present war. Those who are acquainted with Bismarck's writings know that the present war has not been caused by England's jealousy or Russia's ambitions, or France's thirst for revenge, but only by

Germany's own folly, and especially by the action of her Emperor, who dismissed Bismarck, disregarded his warnings, and plunged the nation into a war which may end in Germany's destruction.

Bismarck died at the ripe age of eighty-two. During no less than thirty-nine years he was in the service of the Government, first as Ambassador and then as Prime Minister and Chancellor. As Prime Minister of Prussia and Chancellor of Germany he was uninterruptedly in office during twenty-eight years, and during the whole of that long period he laboured and fought unceasingly with the single object of establishing the German Empire and of consolidating it. Bismarck scarcely knew the meaning of pleasure or of relaxation. He laboured day and night. Frequently in the course of the night he called one of his secretaries to his bedside and dictated to him. The great Chancellor gave all his time, in fact his whole life, to his country. After his dismissal in 1890 he spent the last eight years, not in resting from his labours, but in fighting for his country. He fought not against the Emperor, as his enemies and enviers have often asserted, but against the pernicious policy, the incompetent statesmen, and the dangerous influences which, he feared, would cause Germany's downfall. Bismarck laboured and fought in vain. A century after his birth the wonderful edifice which he erected almost single-handed seems to be crumbling. One man created the German Empire, and another one is apparently destroying it.

CHAPTER IV

THE FOUNDATIONS OF GERMAN EDUCATION AND OF THE NATIONAL CHARACTER[1]

THERE is a vast literature on German Education. Innumerable books, pamphlets, and articles give us the fullest details of the German school system in all its branches. Enthusiastic British and American educationalists have explored the great education machine of Germany in every aspect, and have bidden the Anglo-Saxon countries to copy it. However, most writers on German Education have considered only its outward aspects and its present state. They have failed to explain to us the secret of Germany's education. An educational system, like a national constitution, cannot be copied. It is a thing that has been evolved in the course of centuries. We can understand German education and the German character only if we go back to the foundations, if we consider the way by which the German educational system has been created.

The Germans, and particularly the North Germans, the Prussians, were until comparatively recent times a nation of ignorant boors. To-day they are the best educated, or at least the most educated, people in the world. They have been made what they are by their great rulers, especially by Frederick William, the Great Elector, King Frederick William the First, and King Frederick the Great.

It would, perhaps, lead too far to study the government

[1] From *The Contemporary Review*, January 1916.

and the influence of the Great Elector. He ruled from 1640 to 1688. It requires some mental effort to appreciate his educational activities at the present day. It will perhaps suffice to say that he introduced in Prussia the *régime* of enlightened absolutism as has been shown in the beginning of this book. He destroyed the independence of the nobility, of the towns, and of the estates, and made the whole people a willing instrument in the hands of their ruler.

The Great Elector died, and was succeeded by his son, Frederick, who became the first King of Prussia. The son was a worthless monarch. He sacrificed the welfare of his country to his vanity and his lust. Under his rule Prussia declined and decayed. He was succeeded by his son, King Frederick William the First, a coarse-mannered, ignorant brute. Frederick William was as uncultured as was President Kruger. At the same time he possessed, like Kruger, great natural abilities. He allowed himself to be guided by his instincts. He ruled Prussia absolutely in accordance with his will, in accordance with the precedent which the Great Elector had created. Frederick William loved the army. He was fond of order and cleanliness, and he was extremely thrifty and parsimonious. He founded in Prussia a model administration and a model army, and he moulded the character of the people upon his own.

Frederick the First had tried to imitate Louis the Fourteenth of France. He spent the money of the citizens lavishly and almost ruined the country. His son was outraged by the outlandish elegance and luxury, the waste and immorality, which his father had introduced in Prussia. His instinct rebelled against his surroundings in his early childhood. When, as a small boy, he was given a dress of the most precious brocade, he refused to wear it. At great trouble he was prevailed upon to put it on. However, before joining the company he crept into a chimney, covered

himself with soot, and entered the royal presence looking like a sweep. He hated the full-bottomed powdered wigs with enormous flowing curls which Louis the Fourteenth had made popular. One day the little prince was sitting among a number of pompous old courtiers ornamented with the largest and costliest French wigs. He himself wore only a little one. Suddenly, the Crown Prince exclaimed that it was too hot for wearing wigs. The courtiers of course agreed. In a moment Frederick William threw his own wig into the blazing fire, exclaiming, 'He is a rascal who does not follow the Crown Prince's example!' All the courtiers regretfully, but obediently, followed suit.

When Frederick William the First came to the throne his first action consisted in inspecting the royal accounts and in reducing the royal expenditure to one-fifth. Without a moment's delay, all the superfluous courtiers and servants were dismissed or pensioned. All unduly high salaries were reduced. The superfluous royal buildings and grounds were sold or let to the best advantage. Royal parks and ornamental gardens were converted into ploughed fields and into drill grounds for the army. The unnecessary jewellery which his father had accumulated, vast quantities of costly wines, and many horses and carriages were sold. Innumerable objects of silver and gold were sent to the Mint and turned into coin. While in his father's time the characteristic of the Prussian Court had been elegance and luxury, its characteristic feature under Frederick William the First became simplicity and thrift. The King lived like a simple private citizen. Upholstered furniture, carpets, and rich hangings were banished from the royal rooms. The new King preferred plain wooden floors and plain wooden tables and chairs. Simplicity and cleanliness became the predominant note of the royal residence.

The impetuous King hated luxury. He would tolerate luxury neither in his own family nor among others. By legislative enactments, profusion in dress and wastefulness

of expenditure were checked. The King hated the French fashions, and tried to make them ridiculous. With this object in view he caused the most despised men in his army, the provosts, who acted as military police and as executioners, to be dressed at parade in the richest French fashions and in flowing wigs. The ladies at Court were not allowed to use paint or powder. Elaborate French cooking was banished from the royal kitchens. The royal table was supplied with the plainest viands. When the King on his walks noticed an attractive smell of cooking emanating from the house of a peasant or of a citizen of small means, he would not hesitate to enter and to invite himself to dinner. He would ask after the price of the food, and then insist that the royal cook should provide him with a meal of the same kind at the identical price.

In his personal expenditure the King was the thriftiest of men. For the sake of economy he always wore oversleeves and an apron when working at his desk. He checked the accounts of the royal household down to the smallest sums, and woe betide a dishonest servant or one who through ignorance or carelessness had spent too much in supplying the royal family. The same economy which the King practised in his person and his family he required from all the officials and from the private citizens as well. Every penny had to be carefully accounted for. Ministers of State were told that common paper, which was cheaper than white paper, was good enough for their use. In large matters the King was economical as in small ones. Every year considerable sums of money were saved. Officials who wished to acquire the King's favour had to produce large surpluses. Vast sums thus saved were employed for strengthening the army and for improving the country by building canals and high roads, by draining marshes and irrigating dry land, by settling large numbers of foreigners on reclaimed waste lands in Prussia, and by accumulating a fund in ready money in the cellars of the royal castle.

Frederick William the First educated the Prussians not only to habits of frugality, economy, and order, but to industry and thoroughness as well. In his father's time the Government business had been left to underlings, who had abused their position. Frederick William resolved to take the whole national business in his own hands and to become the principal official of the State. He fulfilled his duties most conscientiously. Thoughts of the national business disturbed his sleep. He rose at the break of dawn and worked indefatigably till far into the night. He was no doubt the most industrious man in his kingdom. On every walk and every ride he acted as general inspector to the nation, supervising, admonishing, helping or punishing the people on the spot. When he saw working-men idling at their work he accelerated their movements with his stick. Once on one of his early morning walks the King approached one of the Potsdam gates and noticed that a traveller who had arrived by the night mail from Hamburg was knocking in vain at the gate. The enraged King had the gate opened, rushed into the gatekeeper's house, and with his stick drove him out of bed and out of office. Then, returning to the astonished traveller he apologised to him, and expressed his deep regret that a Prussian official should have been so neglectful of his duties. Frederick William listened to all complaints, and investigated them in person if possible. While he insisted that all the citizens should be industrious and thrifty, he was always pleased when he saw hard-working men enjoying innocent amusements. Once he came, on one of his walks, to an inn where people were playing at ninepins. He watched their game and praised them for spending their leisure hours in such a healthy way. The players told their friends, and when the King happened to pass the ninepin-alley a few days later there was a crowd of loafers who waited for the King's applause. Immediately the King grew red in the face, rushed among them, and drove them to their business with his stick.

Frederick William the First died in 1740, and was succeeded by his son, Frederick the Great. Frederick the Great is known to the world chiefly as a soldier and as a diplomat. Like Napoleon the First, he was his own Commander-in-Chief, Minister of War, Chief of the Staff, and Secretary of Foreign Affairs. It is not so much known that Frederick the Great, like his father, administered in person all the principal offices of State, that he was a great administrator and, before all, a great educator in the widest sense of the word. He was an indefatigable worker. He rose in summer at three o'clock in the morning, and in winter at four o'clock, and his servants had instructions to get him out of bed by force if he did not rise immediately when called. A quarter of an hour after having been awakened, Frederick was at his desk, reading his correspondence and dictating replies. He, like his father, became to the Prussian people a model of industry, thoroughness, and economy.

Frederick the Great left numerous hitherto unpublished writings for the guidance of his successors, as well as printed essays and books scarcely known to the English-speaking peoples, in which he explained the principles which guided his numerous activities. His enlightened views as to education in the narrower sense are extremely interesting and valuable, especially as they have had the greatest influence upon Prusso-German educational policy. He wrote in his 'Mémoires depuis la Paix':

Custom, which rules the world, holds imperious sway over the narrow-minded. Still, a Government must not restrict its activities to a single aim. It must be prompted to action not only by the consideration whether action is profitable. The public welfare has numerous aspects, and the Government should interest itself in all. Among the objects which the Government should further with particular care, the education of youth is one of the most important. . . . Unfortunately teachers strive merely to fill the memory of

their pupils with facts and dates, and omit to strengthen their intelligence and their judgment.

Frederick the Great believed that by a wisely directed education a nation might be raised rivalling the ancient Greeks and Romans in bravery and general ability. He stated in his pamphlet, ' Lettre sur l'Éducation,' written in 1769 :

The vast number of great men which Rome and Greece have produced have influenced me in favour of the education of the ancients. I am convinced that by following their methods one can create a nation superior in character and ability to the generality of modern nations.

The education given to the children of the nobility throughout Europe is extremely bad. In Prussia they are given their first education in the parental house, and an intermediate and higher education at the schools and the universities. In the house of the parents, blind parental love prevents them giving their children the necessary correction. Mothers particularly, even if they rule their husbands with despotic severity, have a boundless indulgence for their children. These are handed over to servants, who flatter and spoil them, who inspire them with pernicious ideas, and who thus fatally influence minds so tender. The educators who are generally chosen for the children when they are a little older are, as a rule, either clergymen or young lawyers who often themselves need educating. . . .

Children are trained to habits of idleness by being allowed to be idle. Men who wish to get on in the world require a hard and laborious education. Boys should be given work of composition, which should be corrected and recorrected. By forcing them to rewrite and to improve their work, they will be taught to think correctly and to express their ideas with facility. Instead of following this method, teachers cram the brains of the young with facts and allow the working intelligence of their pupils to remain inactive and undeveloped and to become atrophied. Children are forced to accumulate knowledge, but are prevented from acquiring that discriminating intelligence with which alone they can make good use of the knowledge which they have acquired.

The softness of their first education makes boys effeminate, comfort-loving, lazy, and cowardly. Thus, instead of rearing a hardy race resembling the ancients, a race of pleasure-loving sybarites is created. Hence young men lead lives of idleness and of self-indulgence. They believe that they have been born to enjoy comfort and pleasure, and that men of their position are under no obligation to be useful members of society. Consequently, they will commit follies of every kind, run into debt, drink and gamble, and ruin their families.

Young men cannot be too well educated. They cannot possess too much knowledge, whatever their calling may be. The profession of arms, for instance, requires very vast knowledge. Nevertheless, one often hears people say: 'My boy will not learn. I shall therefore make him a soldier.' He may become a private, but not an officer qualified to fill the highest posts.

In the administration of justice and of the national finances, in the diplomatic service and in the army, illustrious birth is an advantage. However, all would be lost if birth should become more potent than merit. A Government which would exalt birth above merit would no doubt experience fatal consequences. . . . It is an error to believe that the arts and sciences soften the national character. All that serves to enlighten the mind and to extend the range of knowledge, elevates the national spirit.

In Frederick's opinion, education should improve the character and increase the abilities of the people. It should be practical and useful rather than ornamental and showy. These principles should apply to the education of girls as well. He wrote in his 'Lettre sur l'Éducation':

I must confess that I am surprised to see that people of the highest position bring up their daughters like chorus girls. They chiefly wish that their daughters should be admired, that they should please by their appearance. Apparently it is considered unnecessary that they should be esteemed, and it is forgotten that their business in life consists in raising families. Their education should be

directed towards their principal object in life. They should be taught to detest everything that is dishonourable. They ought to learn wisdom and be made to acquire useful and lasting qualities. Instead of this, parents endeavour to cultivate their beauty and grace, attractions which are evanescent. Example is more precious than precept. How then can parents teach their daughters wisdom and virtue if they themselves lead idle and frivolous lives and devote themselves to luxury and to other scandalous practices?

Frederick the Great clearly recognised that the sciences and arts are apt to increase the prestige and the power of a nation. He regretted that the Prussians were a nation of boors, and he wished to create culture among them by a suitable education. He therefore encouraged all the sciences and arts, established learned institutions, and promoted study and investigation in every way. He wrote in his ' Discours de l'Utilité des Sciences ' :

The inborn gifts of men are small. Men possess tendencies which education may develop. Men's knowledge must be increased so as to widen their horizon. Their memories must be filled with facts, so that their imagination will have sufficient material with which it can work. The critical faculties of men must be sharpened so as to enable them to discriminate between the valuable and the worthless. The greatest genius among men, if devoid of knowledge, is like an uncut diamond. How many geniuses have been lost to society, and how many truly great men have lived and died in obscurity, because their great natural gifts remained undeveloped either through lack of education or through lack of opportunity! The welfare and the glory of the State require that the people should be as well educated and as enlightened as possible, for then only can the nation produce men of the highest ability in every walk of life for the good of the country. . . .

All enlightened rulers have patronised and encouraged those learned men whose labours are useful to society, and now matters have come to such a pitch that a State will

soon be a century behind its neighbours if it neglects to encourage the sciences. In this respect Poland furnishes us with a warning example.

Very interesting are Frederick's own instructions for the Académie des Nobles in Berlin, where sons of the nobility were to be educated. Frederick the Great wrote:

The professor of law should draw upon Hugo Grotius. The pupils should not be turned into juridical experts. Well-brought-up men should possess some sound general ideas about the law, but need not have profound legal knowledge. The law professor shall therefore limit himself to giving to his pupils some knowledge of the rights of the citizens, of the rights of the people, and of the rights of the monarch. They should have some idea of international law. At the same time they should be told that international law lacks that authority and compelling power which are possessed by the ordinary law, and that it is therefore a phantom to which sovereigns appeal even when they are violating it. The lessons will be wound up by the study of the Frederician code, which, being the body of the national laws, should be known by all the citizens.

If the pupils should do wrong, they must be punished. If they do not know their lessons, they should be made to wear a donkey's head. If they are lazy, they should be given only bread and water. If they are ignorant through ill-will, they should be locked up, deprived of food, scolded, served last at table, not be allowed to carry their sword in public, and be compelled to ask pardon in public. Obstinate pupils should be allowed to carry only an empty scabbard until they repent of their obstinacy. But under pain of imprisonment the governors of the academy are prohibited from beating their pupils. As they are young men of position, they should possess greatness of soul and a keen sense of honour. The punishments inflicted on them should awaken their ambitions but should not humiliate them.

Law is an important part of the national education. Frederick the Great was eminent not only as an educa-

tionalist, but also as a law-giver. He considered that the citizens were entitled to obtain justice quickly and cheaply, that the confusion and the multiplicity of laws prevented the poor obtaining justice, and enabled the rich and cunning to oppress the poor and the weak. He laid down his principles regarding the laws in various writings. In his ' Dissertation sur les Raisons d'Établir ou d'Abroger les Lois ' he wrote :

Few and wise laws make the people happy, while the multiplicity of laws embarrasses jurisprudence. A good doctor does not overdose his patients with medicines, nor does a skilful legislator overdose the public with superfluous laws. Too many medicines are harmful. They neutralise one another. Too many laws create a maze, in which the lawyers and justice itself become lost.

England has a law against bigamy. Once a man was accused of having married five wives. As the law had to be interpreted literally, he could not be punished for bigamy. To make the law clear it ought to have stated : ' Whoever marries more than one woman will be punished.' The vaguely worded laws of England, which are literally interpreted, have given rise to the most ridiculous abuses.

Carefully worded laws leave no room for chicanery. When they are vaguely and obscurely expressed, it becomes necessary to discuss and to determine the intention of the law-givers, and judges, instead of adjudicating on the facts, have to waste their time in expounding and interpreting the law.

One can limit the addresses of lawyers to the recital of facts which can be supported by proofs, and their addresses may be concluded with a short recapitulation. Nothing is more powerful and more moving than an appeal to the passions, to sentiment, made by a man gifted with eloquence. An eloquent advocate can move his hearers in any way he likes, and can thus obscure the truth. Lycurgus and Solon prohibited the use of eloquence in the law courts. . . . Prussia has followed that wise custom of Greece. Eloquence is banished from our pleadings.

When the laws of a State have not been collected in a

code it is only natural that the existing laws frequently contradict each other. As they have been made by different legislators at different times, they lack that unity which is essential in all important matters.

In his ' Essai sur les Formes de Gouvernement ' Frederick wrote :

Good laws must be clearly expressed. Otherwise trickery can evade them, and cunning take advantage of them, and then the weak will become a prey to the powerful and the cunning. Legal procedure should be as short as possible. Otherwise the people will be ruined by protracted law suits. They should not have to spend vast sums in litigation, for they are entitled to justice. The Law Department of the Government cannot be too watchful in protecting the people against the grasping greed of the lawyers. The whole legal apparatus should be kept in order by periodical inspections, when those who believe that they have been wronged by the law can place their complaints before the visiting Commission.

Punishments should never be excessive. Violence should never displace the laws. It is better that a sovereign should be too mild than too severe. Laws must be devised in accordance with the national character. A docile people does not require severe laws.

More than 150 years ago Frederick the Great endeavoured to make the laws plain and clear to all by compiling a code. Great Britain is still devoid of a code. Contradictory laws and all the evils described by Frederick the Great abound. The law in England, and in America too, is a scandal, and the lawyers oppose the compilation of the laws in a code in their own interest.

The old Prussian Code, which was inspired by the ideas of Frederick the Great, is a model of clearness and brevity. It is interesting not only because it shows how plain and simple the law can be made by a government which has the will to simplify it, but also because it shows how powerful

an educational instrument legislation can become in the hands of a wise government. The old Prussian Code established clearly the rights and duties of ruler and ruled, of the State and of the citizen. While England and the United States are swayed by individualism, while in the Anglo-Saxon countries the interests of the individual are placed above those of the community as a whole, Frederick the Great impressed upon his people throughout his Code the fact that the whole is more important than the part, that the State is more important than the individual. In the Introduction to the Code we read, in the beautifully clear and brief language which makes it a model of style :

Every citizen is obliged to promote the welfare and security of the community in accordance with his position and means. If the rights and duties of the individual should come into collision with the promotion of the general welfare, the rights and advantages of the individual citizen must range after the interests of the community. On the other hand, the State is obliged to make good the damage which individuals may suffer by sacrificing their rights and interests to the general welfare.

It will be noticed that the State, the community, was given enormous powers over the individual, powers which might be abused. To prevent their abuse, the citizens were enabled to proceed at law against the State with the same ease with which they could proceed against one another. The Code stated :

Differences between the head of the State and his subjects will be settled before the ordinary law courts, in accordance with the law, and will be decided by them.

That was not an empty assertion. While in England and in the United States the popular representation is all-powerful, and can, with impunity, act unjustly towards the citizens, the Prussian people were enabled by law to place their differences with Government and ruler before

the law courts. When Frederick the Great had built the *château* of Sansouci he found that a windmill close by disturbed him at his work. He offered to buy the mill, but the miller refused to part with it at any price. Annoyed by his refusal, the King threatened to seize the mill, paying the miller compensation, whereupon the proprietor fearlessly replied that the King could not act against the law, that he would take the matter to the law courts if Frederick used violence, and the result was that the miller remained in undisturbed possession of his property.

By the action of the Great Elector, of Frederick William the First, and of Frederick the Great, the ruler and the Government of Prussia had been given the greatest powers. Frederick the Great was no doubt a despot, but he was an enlightened despot. He claimed for the State the most far-reaching rights, but he insisted that ruler and Government, being endowed with the greatest power, were obliged to fulfil their duty towards the citizens, that they should act towards them the part of Providence. The old Prussian Code lays down:

All rights and duties of the State towards the citizens are united in the sovereign.

The principal duty of the ruler of the State consists in maintaining peace and security towards other nations and in the interior of the country, and in protecting every citizen in the enjoyment of his life and property against violence and against disturbance.

The duties before mentioned were generally recognised by conscientious sovereigns. However, Frederick the Great went farther. He was of opinion that the Government should not only protect the citizens, but should also promote their prosperity by wise interference, and come to their aid when in distress. The Code states:

It is the duty of the ruler to provide measures and create institutions whereby the citizens will obtain means

and opportunities for developing their abilities and powers, for using them and for increasing their prosperity.

Hence, the head of the State is possessed of all the privileges and powers which are required in order to obtain this object.

The State is obliged to maintain the security of the subjects and to defend their person, their honour, their rights, and their property.

Hence, the State is obliged to take the measures and to create the institutions necessary for providing justice, for taking care of those who cannot help themselves, and for preventing and punishing transgressions and crimes.

Germany was the first State to introduce a system of National Insurance. As Bismarck inaugurated the first national insurance laws, it is often believed that he originated Germany's social policy. In reality he merely carried out the duties which Frederick the Great had recommended, and which were laid down in the old Code. The old Prussian Code distinctly states that those citizens who are in need are entitled to employment, and that they are entitled to support if employment cannot be found for them, or if they are unable to work. On the other hand, citizens were not allowed to live in idleness by begging, and institutions which encouraged idleness and dissipation, even if they were charitable institutions, were not to be tolerated. The Code states :

It is the duty of the State to provide for the maintenance of those citizens who cannot provide for themselves, and who cannot obtain maintenance from those private persons who, according to the law, are obliged to provide for them.

Those who lack means and opportunities to earn a living for themselves and their dependents, are to be supplied with work suitable to their powers and capacities.

Those who will not work, owing to laziness, love of idleness, or other disorderly inclinations, shall be made to do useful work by compulsion and punishment.

Foreign beggars must neither be allowed to enter the

country nor to remain in it if they have entered it, and if they should have succeeded in entering it by stealth, they must be sent back across the frontier.

The native poor must not beg. They must be sent back to the place to which they belong, and must there be provided for in accordance with the law. The State is entitled and obliged to create institutions and to take measures which prevent destitution among the citizens, and which prevent exaggerated expenditure and waste.

Arrangements and institutions which promote idleness, especially among the masses of the people, and which are harmful to diligence and industry, must not be tolerated within the State.

Charitable and other institutions which favour and promote inclination towards idleness, may be dissolved by the State, and their income may be used for the benefit of the poor.

Those who deliberately live by begging, such as tramps and idlers of every kind, must be made to work ; and when they are useless they must either be cheaply provided for or be expelled from the country as strangers.

Thieves and other criminals who, owing to their evil inclinations, may become dangerous to the community, shall not be allowed to leave prison after they have served their sentence unless they have shown that they are able to make an honest living.

Authorities and officials who neglect the preventive measures outlined will be held responsible for themselves and for their subordinates, according to the circumstances of the case.

Germany does not swarm with tramps, touts, and idlers of every kind who live by defrauding charitable organisations and kindly disposed private people, because the nation has been trained to habits of industry and thrift during the last two hundred years. The Prussian sovereigns themselves have given an example of industry and thrift to their people, and they have, in addition, endeavoured to make the people industrious and thrifty by wise legislation, for the principles

contained in the old Code still guide the German Government and the local authorities of the country.

On his journeys, Frederick the Great, like his father Frederick William the First, lent a willing ear to the complaints of all his citizens. Referring to his activity when travelling, he wrote to Voltaire :

I endeavour to prevent that in Prussia the strong oppress the weak, and I try to mitigate sentences which appear to me to be too severe. That is part of my occupation when travelling through my provinces. Every citizen can approach me without let or hindrance, and his complaints are investigated either by myself or by others. Hence I am able to help numerous people who were unknown to me until they handed to me their petitions or complaints. As I am apt to revise sentences the judges are careful and cautious, and are not likely to proceed with over-great harshness.

Frederick the Great endeavoured by law not only to promote industry and to discourage idleness among the lower classes, but among the middle and upper classes as well. Peasants and farmers who cultivated their land badly could be compelled to cede it to others unless they improved its cultivation. By careful Government regulation efficiency was enforced in every direction. Officials could only be appointed if they had given satisfactory proof of their ability, and people of the middle classes were allowed to engage in industrial and professional pursuits only if they had shown their capacity. Quacks, humbugs, and frauds of every kind, who flourish so greatly among Anglo-Saxon nations, were not allowed to make a living in Prussia. In all professions, in all callings, from the highest to the lowest, efficiency and competence, thoroughness and industry, were required and were enforced by appropriate regulations and laws. The nobility were given great privileges, but corresponding duties were required of them. Appointments were to be made only according to ability and merit, and noble-

men who had disgraced themselves or had not done their duty towards the State, could be deprived of their title and position either by the sovereign or by the law courts. Full religious liberty was granted, but no religious body was allowed to encourage hostility to the State or to promote immorality, for the Code stated :

Every citizen must be allowed complete freedom of religion and of conscience.

On the other hand, every religious body is obliged to teach its members fear of God, obedience to the laws, loyalty towards the State, and moral behaviour towards the citizens.

Two centuries ago the Germans were a nation of boors. They were poor, ignorant, backward, and undisciplined. They have become a cultivated and a powerful nation by the training which they received from their ruler-statesmen, who have been the most successful educators, in the widest sense of the word, which the world has seen. Great Britain and the United States may learn from their example.

CHAPTER V

THE GERMAN ARMY AND THE GENERAL STAFF

The success of an army, like that of any individual, depends, in the first place, not upon its brute strength, but upon its brain. The General Staff is the brain of an army. A General Staff in some form or other has existed in armies since time immemorial. Cromwell had an excellent General Staff, although it bore a different name. However, the General Staff in its modern and most perfect form is a German invention. Count von Moltke's greatest merit consists in having created the German General Staff upon foundations which promised to ensure its permanent usefulness and value.

Unfortunately no English books on military affairs give a true inside view of the wonderful organisation of the German General Staff. The existing military literature deals exclusively with its outward activities. The most valuable account existing is contained in the confidential reports which Colonel Stoffel, who was the military attaché of France in Berlin from 1866 to 1870, sent to his Government. As that book has not been translated into English, I would herewith give some extracts from it which describe the organisation and activities of the German General Staff:

The Great General Staff in Berlin is perfectly organised for the training of officers and for serving as a brain to the army. At its headquarters may be found all the documents

necessary for studying the different European armies and the countries which may become theatres of war. All books, military journals, pamphlets, and other publications, maps, charts, &c., which appear anywhere in Europe are collected and classified. It possesses particularly the most complete investigations regarding the countries bordering upon Prussia. A special feature is a collection of the most detailed studies regarding the resources of the various countries, their geographical features, their roads, towns, and villages, their population, their revenues, their watercourses, the volume, depth, and width of streams, their points of passage, &c. Nothing similarly complete exists in France.

It must be proclaimed very loudly, and as an incontro vertible truth, that the Prussian General Staff is the first and foremost in Europe. The French Staff cannot be compared with it. I have unceasingly pointed this out, being convinced that if there should be an early war, the North German Federation would derive the very greatest advantages from its General Staff, while the French would terribly regret the inferiority of theirs. This question seems to me to be the gravest of all. I do not wish to disguise it, and my conviction is so strong that I raise a cry of alarm. Caveant consules ! I should not do my duty did I act differently. . . .

General von Moltke is the chief of the staff, and he possesses almost absolute powers. He chooses the officers who are to be admitted and to be employed by the General Staff. He makes the promotions, which the War Minister merely ratifies, and he distributes staff officers throughout the army. His power is practically unlimited, and his position, which would appear incomprehensible in France, appears in Prussia only natural, because the integrity and merit of von Moltke are generally recognised in that country.

Any lieutenant in the army, after three years' service with his regiment, may enter the War Academy (Kriegs-Akademie) at Berlin. This is an important military high school. It is the foremost military school in Europe by the character of the teachers and by that of the tuition. It is not merely a staff school, for it has a larger aim. Its

object is to familiarise chosen and ambitious officers with the higher aspects of the art of war by giving them a training which will develop their intellectual faculties, and which will enable them to become good staff officers and prepare them for obtaining a high command. . . .

Of the 120 lieutenants who on an average wish to join the academy every year, only the 40 who show most ability are admitted. They are selected by severe examinations from the 120 who have come forward. The course of the study extends over three years; and it continues during nine months of every year. During the remaining three months the officers rejoin their regiments and take part in the autumn manœuvres. In the third year the pupils receive their training in actual staff duties and travel during a month through varied country under the guidance of their professors. During that month they occupy themselves with reconnaissances, practical studies of the ground, military map-making, placing camps for troops, and other practical military problems. . . .

When these three years of training have passed, all the lieutenants are sent back to their regiments, and the professors and the director of the academy point out to General von Moltke the most promising and the most zealous pupils. Now of the forty officers the twelve ablest are chosen, and these are transferred for six or nine months to a regiment belonging to another arm than that with which they have hitherto been acquainted. Those men who during that new stage have shown the necessary zeal and ability in their new surroundings are then called by General von Moltke to Berlin to serve their apprenticeship on the General Staff. However, they work there not in staff officer's uniform, but in their regimental uniform. The distinction of being allowed to wear a staff officer's uniform is not easily obtained. . . .

The one or two years which the officers chosen spend at the General Staff headquarters in Berlin, learning the practical staff business, are of the greatest importance to their future career, for they attend the highest military training school of the country, which is directed by General

von Moltke in person. By personally supervising the training of the young officers, von Moltke becomes acquainted with their character, and is able to judge of their abilities. He carefully introduces these young men to the work of each of the departments of the General Staff, and in addition he delivers lectures to them. He orders them to write essays on subjects which he chooses himself, and he reads and criticises these essays before the assembled officers. However, in doing so he never mentions the name of the author, in order neither to hurt the feelings of the unsuccessful nor to arouse a spirit of vanity among the successful. . . .

When this temporary service at the headquarters of the General Staff, which is a kind of apprenticeship, has been completed, General von Moltke chooses secretly those officers with whom he has been working who are to be appointed to the General Staff. He could, of course, immediately appoint those whom he considers to be the most competent. However, in order not to hurt the feelings of the unsuccessful men, all the officers who have served their apprenticeship are indiscriminately sent back to their regiments, where they resume their former duties. The less gifted are left there, but the most promising ones are, after several months' practical service, promoted captains over the heads of their fellows, and are given the distinguishing and much-coveted uniform of the General Staff. . . .

General von Moltke employs the captains who have thus been chosen according to his discretion. He gives them work for which they have shown particular aptitude, and he sends the majority of the men to the staffs of the different army corps in the provinces, where they become acquainted with the corps duties. The Prussian staff officers, unlike the French, are not permanently tied to their desks. They are not occupied all the time with clerical work, for all this is left to non-commissioned officers and privates.

In being chosen for the General Staff the officers gain not only prestige, but obtain at the same time substantial material advantage, for by being promoted captains, they

obtain that grade from six to eight years earlier than they would have obtained it in the ordinary way. . . .

Out of the 120 promising officers who on an average come forward every year, desiring to join the War Academy, only the forty ablest are admitted after severe examinations, as has been pointed out, and of these forty only the twelve most capable men are finally chosen, as has been shown. However, among the officers who have not come forward to study at the War Academy, and among those who have attended the War Academy and who have been rejected, there may of course be men of very great ability. In order that these should be discovered and employed on the General Staff, the regimental commanders are invited to propose every year, through the generals commanding, to von Moltke those officers who have shown the greatest professional knowledge, zeal, and aptitude. The commanders of regiments and corps are of course anxious to discover as many able officers as possible in their commands, and to recommend them to von Moltke. To the officers who have thus been recommended to him, General von Moltke sends problems to solve and questions to answer. If they show signs of talent and of ability in carrying out the tasks which von Moltke gives them, he calls them to the General Staff and employs them tentatively. If they give satisfaction, they receive permanent appointments. If they disappoint him, they are sent back to their regiments. . . .

All the mechanical staff work is left to underlings. The staff officers themselves are occupied solely with the study of important military questions, with brain work of the highest importance. Every year the chief of the staff of each army corps makes with all the staff officers a so-called staff journey in order to extend their knowledge. On that journey practical problems of war are treated. The officers of the Great General Staff of Berlin make every year a similar staff journey, which is conducted by General von Moltke himself and which lasts from two to three weeks. . . .

As shown by the details given in the foregoing, the superiority of the Prussian General Staff over the staffs of other nations is due firstly to the careful selection of the

staff officers from all the officers of the army, for all officers may compete for staff appointments, as has been shown. Its superiority is due, in the second place, to the fact that only ambitious, capable, and industrious officers will come forward, for they know that they can hope to succeed in obtaining a staff appointment only if they work earnestly and with the greatest concentration, for they are aware that only the ablest will be selected—that appointments are made exclusively by merit. By this most careful selection, and by the highest professional training of the staff officers, Prussia has secured for herself the foremost body of staff officers in the world. The more frequently I compare the German staff officers with the French staff officers, the more I am struck with the superiority of the former.

It has been said that genius is an infinite capacity of taking pains. Count von Moltke was a most painstaking and conscientious worker. By infinite application and by unremitting labour, he succeeded by the means described to select from the large body of the German officers practically all the best men and training them in their duties. The great successes which the German army has obtained in 1866, in 1870–71, in the present war, are chiefly attributable to the General Staff, which has been the brain of the army in the fullest sense of the term, which has trained the commanders. Other nations may learn from Germany's example. The methods practised by von Moltke are of course applicable not only to the army, but to every Government department and to every large commercial organisation.

CHAPTER VI

THE CAUSES OF THE WAR[1]

WARS are due to direct and indirect causes, and, as a rule, the latter are far more potent than the former. Hence, incidents which are small, if not trivial, in themselves often bring about a long and universally expected outbreak of hostilities. The Franco-German War of 1870–71, for instance, was not caused by Bismarck's alteration of the Ems telegram, but by the pent-up and century-old hatred existing between France and Germany, by the passionate desire of the German States to form a united Empire, and by the determination of Napoleon the Third to prevent such a union and to dominate and rule the continent of Europe. The aims of France and Germany were incompatible. The deep-seated Franco-German differences had produced a state of tension and bitterness between the two nations which made war inevitable, and the blustering, blundering, and interfering policy of Napoleon the Third had intensified and accelerated matters and brought them to a crisis. The Ems telegram was merely the last straw. The outbreak of the present war had been expected for a long time. It was overdue, and it did not take the world by surprise. The tension among the Great Powers had increased during many years. Long ago the breaking-point had been reached, and when it was seen that the dreaded hour had actually arrived, many people exclaimed, almost with relief: At last!

[1] From *The Fortnightly Review*, September 1914.

Exactly as the outbreak of the Franco-German War of 1870–71 was rather due to Napoleon's folly than to Bismarck's genius, even so the outbreak of the present war is due chiefly to the ambition, the self-confidence, and the insufficient capacity of the German Emperor, who has played the part of Napoleon the Third in almost every particular.

When William the Second came to the throne Germany dominated the continent of Europe, and her preponderant position was willingly borne, because she was believed to be peaceful and contented. With the advent of William the Second the character of her foreign policy changed completely. He dismissed his Chancellor, undertook the direction of Germany's foreign policy, and announced that he would steer the ship of State over a new course, his own course. He imparted to Germany's policy his own nervous restlessness. Germany began to interfere in every quarter of the world, and to pick unnecessary quarrels, not only with her great neighbour-States, but with Great Britain and the United States as well. Even the small States bordering upon Germany and Germany's own allies became uneasy and alarmed at the Emperor's unceasing, neurotic, and dangerous activity. Everywhere Germany's policy became disliked and suspected.

During the reign of William the Second one great crisis in the affairs of Europe followed another. Owing to his feverish interference in all parts of the world, the great nations were dragged repeatedly to the very brink of a world-war. Since 1888 the military and naval forces of Germany were increased at an unprecedented rate, and all Europe and the United States had to follow suit. Year by year the armament race became more furious, more exasperating, and more unbearable, and even the small and peaceful neutral States, feeling alarmed at Germany's diplomatic and military activities, felt compelled to arm to the utmost. In Bismarck's time, Germany had been the

nucleus of a great peace group of nations, and Germany's probable opponents were isolated. Under the *régime* of William the Second the grouping of Europe changed completely. The nations threatened by the Emperor's unceasing activity felt insecure in their isolation. A strong group of Powers opposed to Germany's expansion, or rather to the Emperor's policy, arose. Germany became virtually isolated.

Bismarck had wisely followed a policy of concentration, a purely continental policy. He was anxious to be able to rely on British support in case of a great national emergency. William the Second threw Bismarck's wise caution rashly to the wind. Not being satisfied with Germany's great position, not being satisfied with the fact that Germany dominated the land, he wished her to dominate the sea as well. In resounding phrases, such as 'Germany's future lies upon the water,' 'The trident must be in our fist,' and many similar ones, he announced his determination to his people and to the world.

Encouraged by the most influential circles, and aided by the official apparatus, an anti-British agitation was created throughout Germany. In 1895 the Kruger telegram and the diplomatic campaign connected with it clearly revealed Germany's intentions. In autumn 1899 the Boer War broke out, and the German Government confirmed by its action its anti-British attitude. The occasion of the Boer War and of England's initial defeats was used for denouncing this country by an unscrupulous campaign of vituperation and calumny, and for demanding an enormous increase of the German fleet. Many Germans believed that the sun of Great Britain had begun to set, and they wished Germany to become her successor. On the day of the disaster of Magersfontein, on December 11, 1899, Prince Bülow, who was then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, significantly said in the Reichstag, in support of an immensely increased naval programme :

The necessity to strengthen our fleet arises out of the present state of the world, and out of the circumstances of our oversea policy. Only two years ago no one would have been able to foresee the way in which things have begun to move. It is urgent to define the attitude which we have to take up in view of what is happening. . . . We must create a fleet strong enough to exclude attack from *any* Power.

A fortnight after the disaster at Spionkop, Admiral Tirpitz, the Secretary of State for the Imperial Navy, stated: 'We do not know what adversary we may have to face. We must therefore arm ourselves with a view to meeting the most dangerous naval conflict possible.'

In spring 1900, while the Boer War was still in progress, and its issue extremely doubtful, the German Government brought out an enormous navy bill. In its preamble the German Government clearly showed that it desired to challenge Great Britain's naval supremacy, for in it we read the ominous words:—

Germany requires a fleet of such strength that a war with the mightiest naval Power would involve risks jeopardising the supremacy of that Power.

It is not absolutely necessary that the German fleet should be as strong as that of the greatest sea Power, because, generally, a great sea Power will not be able to concentrate all its forces against Germany. But even if it should succeed in confronting us in superior force, the enemy would be so very much weakened in overcoming the resistance of a strong German fleet that, notwithstanding the victory gained, the enemy's naval supremacy would no longer be secured by the possession of a sufficient fleet.

The German Press is largely controlled, or inspired, by the German Government, and the Government is so powerful that it is able to exercise, in various ways, control over German literature and over the activity of public speakers and lecturers. With the evident approval of the

Government, the old anti-British campaign was extended to the utmost. Hundreds of University professors, generals, and admirals were encouraged to preach on public platforms and in countless books, pamphlets, and articles, *Britanniam esse delendam.* They preached that Great Britain was a faithless and a decaying nation and Germany's hereditary enemy, that Germany was destined to rule the sea and to rule the world. Mr. Eisenhart wrote in his book, 'Deutschland beim Beginn des Zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts,' Berlin, 1900:

We consider a great war with England in the twentieth century as quite inevitable, and must strain every fibre in order to be prepared to fight that war single-handed. The experience of all time shows that colonial empires are more fragile and less enduring than continental ones. We do not require a fleet against France or Russia. Let them ravage our coasts in case of war. We require a fleet only against England.

The *Koloniale Zeitschrift* wrote on January 18, 1900:

The old century saw a German Europe. The new one shall see a German world. To attain that consummation two duties are required from the present German generation: to keep its own counsel and to create a powerful fleet.

Field-Marshal General Colmar von der Goltz, a leading German soldier, wrote in the *Deutsche Rundschau* of March 1900:

We must contradict the frequently expressed opinion that a war between Germany and Great Britain is impossible. Great Britain is forced to distribute her fleets over many seas in peace as well as in war. In that necessary distribution lies her weakness. Germany is in a better position. . . .

As places are not wanting where the English defences are weak, it would be a mistake to consider a landing in

England a chimera. The distance is short enough if a daring admiral succeeds in securing supremacy on the sea for a short time. The material basis of our power is large enough to enable us to destroy the present superiority of Great Britain.

Innumerable quotations of similar character could easily be given.

When, after various diplomatic defeats and the humiliating issue of the Mexican adventure, the prestige of Napoleon the Third and of Imperial France had declined to the utmost, when the Emperor of the French had alienated all Europe and the majority of the French people, he desired to strengthen his position by a successful war, and he rushed into Bismarck's trap. In case of a war with Prussia he had counted upon the support of Austria-Hungary and Denmark, whom the Prussians had defeated and despoiled, and upon that of Italy, who owed her freedom to France. However, Napoleon the Third, like William the Second, was his own Foreign Minister, and was unable to pursue a consistent policy. Guiding the policy of the State over the heads, or behind the backs, of his Ministers, he had managed France's foreign policy so badly that none of the three Powers upon whose support he had firmly counted was willing to help him. The hour of need found him without a friend.

At the beginning of his reign, when William the Second promised that he would steer the German ship of State on a new course, that his course was the right one, and that he would lead Germany towards a great and glorious future, he was believed in by all German patriots. But when failure followed failure, when it was seen that England, France, and Italy greatly increased their possessions while Germany merely retained her old territories, and when opportunity after opportunity for Germany's expansion was allowed to go by unused, the people surrounding the Monarch became exasperated. In the highest military and

aristocratic circles William the Second was spoken of with contempt as a bungling braggart. After the second Morocco crisis the *Post*, an ultra-patriotic Berlin journal, actually referred to the Emperor as a '*poltron misérable*,' quoting with approval a French journal. Even the Crown Prince revolted against his father and his father's policy, and he openly showed his contempt for it. It is conceivable, and indeed probable, that the state of mind of William the Second in 1914 was similar to that of Napoleon the Third in 1870. Humiliated and ambitious rulers are dangerous.

During more than a century Austria-Hungary has striven to prevent Russia seizing Constantinople and to acquire Salonica for herself. Germany and Austria-Hungary allowed the Balkan War to break out in the firm expectation that it would result in the victory of Turkey and the defeat of the Slavonic Balkan States, to the great advantage of the two Germanic States, which were Turkey's protectors, and which reckoned upon Turkey's support against Russia in case of a great war. The victories of the Allies caused consternation and dismay in Berlin, and especially in Vienna, which is more directly interested in Balkan affairs. Hence Austrian diplomacy endeavoured to weaken the Balkan States by sowing dissension among them. With this object in view, Austria-Hungary forbade Serbia and Montenegro to acquire a harbour on the Adriatic, created an independent State of Albania out of the territory acquired by the Allies, brought about the second Balkan War, and repeatedly threatened Montenegro and Serbia with war, although she knew that Russia would never tolerate an Austrian attack upon Serbia. From a despatch of Sir G. Buchanan, the British Ambassador in St. Petersburg, published in the 'Correspondence respecting the European Crisis,' No. 6 (1914), we learn: 'During the Balkan crisis M. Sazonoff had made it clear to the Austrian Government that war with Russia must immediately follow an Austrian attack on Serbia. It was clear that Austrian domination

of Serbia was as intolerable to Russia as the dependence of the Netherlands on Germany would be to Great Britain. It was, in fact, for Russia a question of life and death.' When, during the Balkan settlement, Austria was on the point of attacking Serbia, the late Archduke Franz Ferdinand, who was in favour of a vigorous foreign policy, went on a flying visit to Springe to plead for the German Emperor's support in case of a collision with Russia, but, to the disgust and sorrow of the German military party, the Emperor declined to help him.

The Archduke Franz Ferdinand and the foremost statesmen of Austria-Hungary were foiled for a time, but they hoped to find an opportunity for crushing Serbia; acquiring Albania, and opening to the Dual Monarchy a road to the coveted port of Salonica. A few weeks before the Archduke's murder, William the Second visited him at his castle of Konopischt in Bohemia. Ostensibly the Emperor visited the Archduke merely in order to see his celebrated rose-gardens. However, it soon leaked out that at Konopischt a secret treaty had been concluded between Austria-Hungary and Germany, and it seemed highly probable that at that castle the German Emperor reversed his former policy, and pledged himself unconditionally to support Austria-Hungary with Germany's entire strength if Austria-Hungary should attack Serbia and should in turn be attacked by Russia.

What was the reason of the Emperor's change of policy?

The morbid instability of the German Emperor's character is perhaps a sufficient explanation for his change of front. Under William the Second Germany's policy has been as incalculable and as unstable as was the policy of France under Napoleon the Third. Besides, during the last few years many of the most eminent German soldiers and thinkers had taught that Germany required elbow-room; that the European balance of power hampered her expansion; that a war between the Triple Alliance on the one

hand and France and Russia on the other was inevitable; that the moment was favourable; that Germany should strike before Russia had entirely recovered from her defeats in Asia, and had completed her great army reorganisation.

In the event of a war with France and Russia, the attitude of Great Britain was, of course, of the greatest importance to Germany. Her action might prove to be the decisive factor in such a war. Italy is most vulnerable by sea, for her principal towns lie on the seashore, and afford ideal targets to naval gunners. She has an immense coast-line, and her principal railroads run close to the sea over countless viaducts and bridges, and through hundreds of tunnels which may be destroyed from the sea by a few carefully aimed twelve-inch shells. Last, but not least, Italy is economically at least as dependent upon her maritime trade as is Great Britain. It was, therefore, obvious that Germany and Austria could expect Italy's support in case of war only if Great Britain was friendly or neutral. In these circumstances it was obviously essential that a war should break out in respect of an object in which Great Britain had no direct interest. As there was no defensive alliance between Great Britain on the one side, and France and Russia on the other, but only a loose Entente, it was firmly expected that Great Britain would remain neutral as long as her own interests were not touched. This was believed all the more strongly as Great Britain was generally thought to be an unreliable Power in case of war. Very likely the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and the supporters of his policy persuaded the German Emperor that Great Britain might conceivably not lift a hand in the defence of Serbia. The problem, therefore, was to pick a quarrel with Serbia in which Serbia would appear to be in the wrong. If Great Britain should not assist France and Russia, Italy could safely aid Austria-Hungary and Germany, and would probably do so in the hope of territorial aggrandisement.

An attack of Austria-Hungary upon Serbia might lead

to a war between the Central European Powers on the one side, and France and Russia on the other. However, it was not certain whether Russia was willing to take Serbia's part. Conceivably, Russia had only been bluffing when she informed Austria that an attack on Serbia would be equivalent to an attack on Russia herself. If Austria-Hungary should succeed in smashing Serbia without being involved in a war with Russia, the position of the Triple Alliance would be immensely strengthened, for Russia's prestige among the Balkan Slavs and among the Slavs of Austria-Hungary would have received a most deadly blow. With very little bloodshed the Triple Alliance would have firmly established its supremacy on the Continent. If Russia, after all her threats, was not ready to go to war for Serbia, she would probably also not go to war if Salonica was taken by easy stages. If Russia was merely bluffing, the two Germanic Powers had a chance of establishing their hegemony over the Balkan Peninsula and over Constantinople itself. Much evidence goes to show that the leaders of Germany's foreign policy, and especially the Emperor, firmly calculated upon Russia's unreadiness. Their hopes were apparently imparted to the Ambassadors, and the German Ambassadors, considering themselves rather the Emperor's servants than the servants of their country, humoured the Imperial views as to Russia's unreadiness, as will be seen in the following pages.

A few weeks after the Konopischt interview the Archduke was murdered by Austrian citizens of Servian race. Austria-Hungary took the blow surprisingly quietly. Inquirers demanding to know what the Government proposed to do were merely told that a judicial inquiry was taking place, and that, of course, nothing could be done until the mystery surrounding the crime had been cleared up. "Nobody in authority in Austria-Hungary seemed seriously concerned, nobody seemed to expect that dangerous complications might follow." On July 10 a well-informed

Austrian diplomat casually told an English acquaintance that the murder of the Archduke would cause no trouble with Serbia, and certainly no war. On July 20 Sir Edward Grey wrote to Sir Edward Goschen, the British Ambassador in Berlin: 'I asked the German Ambassador to-day if he had any news of what was going on in Vienna with regard to Serbia. He said he had not, but Austria was certainly going to take some step, and he regarded the situation as very uncomfortable. I said that I had not heard anything recently except that Count Berchtold, in speaking to the Italian Ambassador in Vienna, had deprecated the suggestion that the situation was grave, but had said that it should be cleared up.' Three days later, on July 23, Austria-Hungary addressed to Serbia an unacceptable ultimatum, which brought on the present war!

What had happened in the meantime?

The Times of July 25 contained side by side two equally startling articles, one concerning the breakdown of the Buckingham Palace Conference, and the other giving the astonishing demands addressed by Austria-Hungary to Serbia. There is apparently some connection between the two. It has been shown before that Great Britain's attitude was of the very greatest importance to Germany and Austria-Hungary, in case the Austro-Serbian trouble should lead to a war between the Triple Alliance and France and Russia. A few days before the Serbian ultimatum was despatched, when Count Berchtold told the Italian Ambassador that the situation between Austria-Hungary and Serbia was not grave, there was reason to hope that the Buckingham Palace Conference might lead to a settlement by consent, and to a lasting peace, in Ireland. By July 23 all hope of such a settlement was abandoned. Civil war in Ireland, and perhaps in Great Britain as well, laming the power of the United Kingdom for action abroad, seemed imminent and unavoidable.

Austria's ultimatum was couched in the most abrupt

and threatening language. Without offering a scrap of evidence that the Serbian Government was directly or indirectly responsible for the Archduke's murder, it requested within forty-eight hours the fulfilment of absolutely impossible demands. Within forty-eight hours Serbia was to destroy both her national independence and her constitution. Even if Serbia had been willing to concede all Austria asked for, she could have done so only by passing legislation for which forty-eight hours would have been totally insufficient. Austria's demands were obviously meant to be unacceptable, and to make war inevitable. On July 25 Sir M. de Bunsen telegraphed to Sir Edward Grey from Vienna: 'Language of Press this morning leaves the impression that the surrender of Serbia is neither expected nor really desired.' On July 27 he wired: 'The impression left on my mind is that the Austro-Hungarian Note was so drawn up as to make war inevitable.'

Austria has for many decades followed a timorous and hesitating policy, a policy of inaction and of surrender. During the recent crisis she has acted with energy for the first time since Francis Joseph came to the throne. That unusual and positively reckless energy was undoubtedly caused by the knowledge that she could absolutely rely on Germany's aid, should an attack on Serbia be followed by complications with Russia. It is perfectly clear that Austria acted not by her own volition, but as Germany's agent. In the words of M. Sazonoff, reported by the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg: 'Austria would never have taken such action unless Germany had first been consulted.' The Russian Ambassador in Vienna stated that 'any action taken by Austria to humiliate Serbia could not leave Russia indifferent.' 'If actual war broke out with Serbia it would be impossible to localise it, for Russia was not prepared to give way again as she had done on previous occasions, especially during the annexation crisis of 1909.' The Russian *chargé d'affaires* remarked

to the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs that 'the Austrian Note was drawn up in a form rendering it impossible of acceptance as it stood.' Austria-Hungary evidently sought a war with Serbia, knowing full well that it might lead to a war with Russia. Her action was fully understood in St. Petersburg. On July 25 Sir G. Buchanan reported by telegram to Sir Edward Grey a conversation which he had with the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs. In the course of it the Minister stated: 'Austria's action was in reality directed against Russia. She aimed at overthrowing the present *status quo* in the Balkans and establishing her hegemony there.'

Austria evidently did not intend to restrict herself to punishing Serbia for her unproved complicity in the Archduke's murder. On July 25 Sir R. Rodd reported from Rome to Sir Edward Grey by telegram: 'There is reliable information that Austria intends to seize the Salonica railway.' That view prevailed not only in Italy. A few days later Mr. Beaumont telegraphed to Sir Edward Grey from Constantinople: 'I understand that the designs of Austria may extend considerably beyond the Sanjak and a punitive occupation of Serbian territory. I gathered this from a remark let fall by the Austrian Ambassador here, who spoke of the deplorable economic situation of Salonica under Greek administration and of the assistance on which the Austrian Army could count from Mussulman population discontented with Serbian rule.'

Fate seemed to favour Austria and her partner Germany. The Austrian ultimatum expired on Saturday the 25th at 6 o'clock in the evening. On Sunday, July 26, a collision occurred in Dublin between Nationalist gun-runners and British soldiers. Several Nationalists were killed and many wounded. The sensation was enormous. In Nationalist Ireland a spirit of fierce hatred arose against England and against Ulster. Conciliation between Nationalists and Orangemen seemed out of the question. The outlook for

the Amending Bill, which was intended to pacify Ulster by securing her independence from Dublin, seemed hopeless. Great Britain was simultaneously threatened with civil war, with a revolt of the Nationalists against the Government, and with a split in the Cabinet. England's right arm seemed paralysed.

On the very day of the Dublin bloodshed, the German Emperor suddenly returned from his cruise. In document No. 33 of the White Book, from which the numerous quotations given in this chapter have been taken, we read a telegram from Sir H. Rumbold to Sir Edward Grey stating: 'Emperor returned suddenly to-night, and Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs says that Foreign Office regrets this step which was taken on His Majesty's own initiative.' The high officials of the German Foreign Office regretted the Emperor's arrival apparently because they did not approve of the policy which William the Second, as, before him, Napoleon the Third, carried on over the heads of the responsible officials. Careful study of the White Book reveals the fact that the policy which led to the war was carried on by the Emperor at the instigation, and with the assistance of, the military war party, and of certain Ambassadors against the opinion of the leading men at the German Foreign Office who, despairingly but unsuccessfully, endeavoured to prevent the worst.

Throughout the White Book we find evidence that the German Chancellor and the German Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs did their utmost to preserve the peace of Europe, but that their action was overruled by the rashness of their master. To start with, the deadly Austrian ultimatum, which was the immediate cause of the war, was apparently known and approved of by the Emperor, but was quite unknown to the Foreign Office. On July 25 Sir H. Rumbold telegraphed from Berlin to Sir Edward Grey that he had seen the German Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who had 'confessed privately that the Note

(presented to Serbia) left much to be desired as a diplomatic document. He repeated very earnestly that, though he had been accused of knowing all about the contents of that Note, he had, in fact, had no such knowledge.' On the same day Sir Edward Grey telegraphed to Sir H. Rumbold: 'The German Ambassador read me a telegram from the German Foreign Office saying that his Government had not known beforehand, and had no more than other Powers to do with the stiff terms of the Austrian Note to Serbia.' Five days later, on July 30, Sir M. de Bunsen telegraphed to Sir Edward Grey from Vienna: 'Although I am not able to verify it, I have private information that the German Ambassador (in Vienna) knew the text of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia before it was despatched and telegraphed it to the German Emperor. I know from the German Ambassador himself that he endorses every line of it.' Apparently the fatal ultimatum was drafted by the Austrian Foreign Office with the collaboration of the German Ambassador in Vienna and of the German Emperor, but without the knowledge of the Foreign Office in Berlin and of the German Foreign Secretary!

Unfortunately, the German Emperor is his own Chancellor and his own Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He has very frequently appointed favourites to high positions and dismissed able men, because they lacked the courtier's qualifications. The German Ambassadors are appointed by the Emperor, and it is not unnatural that men who owe their position to the Emperor's good-will, and who know his character, rather report what is likely to please their master than what is true and useful to Germany. William the Second has been extremely unfortunate in the choice of his Ambassadors, and herein lies the reason that Germany has habitually been completely misinformed as to the policy of foreign countries, and as to their attitude in certain contingencies. Owing to the insufficient capacity of her Ambassadors, Germany was totally misinformed as

to the attitude which Russia, France, and Great Britain were likely to adopt if Austria should make war on Serbia. Owing to false but pleasing reports sent to Berlin, the leaders of Germany's foreign policy believed that Russia would keep quiet if Serbia was struck down, that France was not ready, and that, in any case, Great Britain would remain neutral. On July 26 the British Ambassador in Vienna reported to Sir Edward Grey: 'According to confident belief of German Ambassador, Russia will keep quiet during chastisement of Serbia, which Austria-Hungary is resolved to inflict. . . . France, too, was not at all in a condition for facing a war. . . . As for Germany, she knew very well what she was about in backing up Austria-Hungary in this matter.' On July 30 he telegraphed: 'Unfortunately, the German Ambassador is himself so identified with extreme anti-Russian and anti-Serbian feeling prevalent in Vienna that he is unlikely to plead the cause of peace with entire sincerity.' On August 1 the British Ambassador wired: 'I agree with His Excellency (the Russian Ambassador in Vienna) that the German Ambassador at Vienna desired war from the first, and that his strong personal bias probably coloured his action here.'

Similar incapacity was shown by the German representative in St. Petersburg. On July 29, Sir G. Buchanan telegraphed to Sir Edward Grey: 'I fear that the German Ambassador will not help to smooth matters over, if he uses to his own Government the same language as he did to me to-day. He accused the Russian Government of endangering the peace of Europe by their mobilisation, and said, when I referred to all that had been recently done by Austria, that he could not discuss such matters.' M. Sazonoff remarked to Sir G. Buchanan on August 1: 'Germany was unfortunate in her representatives in Vienna and St. Petersburg: the former was a violent Russophobe who had urged Austria on, the latter had reported to his Government that Russia would never go to war.'

When the German Ambassador in St. Petersburg found that by his folly he had been largely responsible for Germany's fatal decision, he completely broke down with despair and remorse. Sir G. Buchanan telegraphed, on July 30, describing the decisive interview between the German Ambassador and M. Sazonoff : 'German Ambassador had a second interview with Minister for Foreign Affairs at 2 A.M., when former completely broke down on seeing that war was inevitable. He appealed to M. Sazonoff to make some suggestion which he could telegraph to Berlin.' *The Times* of August 1 describes the closing scene as follows :

Seeing that Russia had not replied to Germany's ultimatum, Count Pourtales called at the Russian Foreign Office and insisted on seeing M. Sazonoff. In a voice trembling with emotion he asked if Russia agreed to Germany's demand (to demobilise). M. Sazonoff answered that the silence of the Russian Government meant refusal. Count Pourtales repeated his question a second time. M. Sazonoff reiterated his refusal. Count Pourtales asked a third and last time, and again the Minister replied with a firm refusal. Thereupon the Ambassador took his leave crestfallen, handing in the text of a verbal Note. In the hurry it was not noticed that the paper contained alternative replies, one recording Germany's satisfaction with Russia's hypothetical surrender.

Germany seems to have been equally badly informed as to Great Britain's attitude. From many passages in the White Book we learn that she counted firmly on British neutrality.

While the German Chancellor and his Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs desired a peaceful settlement of the Serbian difficulty, the Emperor, supported by his Ambassadors in Vienna and St. Petersburg, and pushed on by the military party, evidently thought the moment favourable for risking a war between Germany and Austria-

Hungary on the one side, and France and Russia on the other, especially as Great Britain seemed likely to remain neutral, being not interested in Serbia and having her hands full with her domestic troubles. According to a telegram sent by the French Minister for Foreign Affairs to the French Ambassador in London, Germany's military preparations began on Saturday, July 25, the very day when Austria's ultimatum to Serbia expired. On July 28, two days after the Dublin massacre, the *Militär Wochenblatt*, the official German army weekly, endeavoured to strengthen the hands of those who were determined on war by printing a remarkable article depreciating the Russian army, and stating that its fighting power was hugely overestimated, that numbers were less important than *moral*, ability of the higher officers, the national spirit, railways, geographical factors, etc. 'In Germany, all military preparations for war,' the journal added, 'have been taken with that attention to all details which is characteristic of Germany. It can, therefore, be said, without exaggeration, that Germany can face the advent of grave events with complete equanimity, trusting to God and her own might.' On the same day the Austrian Emperor published a manifesto to his people, in which he intimated, in no uncertain language, that he was prepared for a war with Russia. He stated:

> . . . In this solemn hour I am fully convinced of the whole significance of my resolve and my responsibility towards the Almighty. I have examined and weighed everything, and with a serene conscience I set out on the path to which my duty points. . . . I trust in Austria-Hungary's brave and devoted forces, and I trust in the Almighty to give the victory to my arms.

This sonorous manifesto would obviously have been very much out of place if Austria-Hungary had contem-

plated only a war with little Serbia, which was completely exhausted by two previous wars.

Austria's determination to challenge Russia, and her readiness to fight that country, feeling sure of Germany's support, was demonstrated still more clearly by the official and inspired Press of the country. The *Pester Lloyd*, for instance, had an article in leaded type on July 28, the day when the Emperor's proclamation was published, in which we read :

The remotest consequences of the action against Serbia have been fully thought out and tested, and accordingly the people can set its mind at rest that the Dual Monarchy, having decided on this step, is in a position to meet each of its consequences with arms in its hands. . . . We possess the strength to make our vital interests respected in all circumstances. This is doubtless no secret to other States, which are certainly very exactly informed as to the forces at the disposal of the Dual Monarchy. If, nevertheless, we support the localisation of the conflict with Serbia, we only give a new proof that our care for the maintenance of the peace of the world is not less than that of any other Power in Europe.

Germany alone could restrain Austria at the critical moment by refusing to follow her into a dangerous adventure, provided her hands were not tied. However, while the German Foreign Office seemed inclined to promote a peaceful solution, the attitude of the Austrian Government remained absolutely unshaken, for reasons which will become apparent only in the future. The German Foreign Office apparently was not only ignorant of the Austrian ultimatum, but worked for peace up to the last moment. Sir Edward Goschen telegraphed on July 28 to Sir Edward Grey : ' At invitation of Imperial Chancellor I called upon his Excellency this evening. He said that he wished me to tell you that he was most anxious that Germany should work together with England for maintenance of general

peace, as they had done successfully in the last European crisis.' On July 29 Sir Edward Goschen telegraphed from Berlin: 'I found Secretary of State very depressed to-day.' On the same day M. Sazonoff telegraphed to Count Benckendorff in London: 'The German Ambassador informs me, in the name of the Chancellor, that Germany has not ceased to exercise a moderating influence at Vienna, and that she will continue to do so, even after the declaration of war.' The last telegrams received from Sir Edward Goschen show that the German Chancellor was absolutely stunned by the course which events had taken. According to newspaper reports, his face was so much distorted by terror and grief that the people did not recognise him when he drove with the Emperor from Potsdam to Berlin.

On July 28 the tone of the German and Austrian Press was confident and warlike, because Great Britain seemed to be incapable of energetic action. The Dublin massacre seemed to continental observers to be the beginning of civil war. They were promptly disillusioned. On July 30 Mr. Asquith stated in the House of Commons: 'It is of vital importance, in the interests of the whole world, that this country, which has no interests of its own directly at stake, should present a united front and be able to speak and act with the authority of an undivided nation.' The second reading of the Amending Bill relating to Ireland was postponed indefinitely. Suddenly Great Britain was seen to present a united front, and to be ready for action. When it was too late, Germany and Austria-Hungary recognised their miscalculation. Great Britain was likely to stand on the side of France and Russia, and if Great Britain should support France and Russia, Italy would obviously desert her allies. Suddenly and unexpectedly the position had become extremely perilous to Germany and Austria-Hungary. These two countries were likely at the same time to incur unexpectedly the active hostility of Great Britain and to lose the support of Italy. In

case of war their chances had suddenly very seriously deteriorated.

Up to July 30, the day when all British party differences disappeared as by magic, in consequence of Mr. Asquith's appeal, Austria-Hungary unconditionally declined all suggestions of negotiation, mediation, or conference in order to settle peacefully her differences with Serbia. That is shown by perusal of Documents 61, 62, 81, and 93, published in the White Book. As late as July 28 Count Berchtold said to the Russian Ambassador that 'the Austro-Hungarian Government could no longer recede, nor enter into any discussion about the terms of the Austro-Hungarian Note.' That haughty and irreconcilable attitude disappeared when, two days later, on July 30, Great Britain had settled her domestic differences in Parliament. On July 30 Sir R. Rodd, the British Ambassador in Rome, telegraphed to Sir Edward Grey:

I learned from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who sent for me this evening, that the Austrian Government had declined to continue the direct exchange of views with the Russian Government. But he had reason to believe that Germany was now disposed to give more conciliatory advice to Austria, as she seemed convinced that we (the British) should act with France and Russia, and was most anxious to avoid issue with us.

On July 30 Germany became evidently nervous about Great Britain, while Austria's attitude was still unchanged. However, on the following day Austria-Hungary also became aware that her Serbian policy, if persisted in, might have the most disastrous consequences to the Dual Monarchy, for M. Sazonoff telegraphed to the Russian Ambassador in London:

The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador declared the readiness of his Government to discuss the substance of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia. M. Sazonoff replied by

expressing his satisfaction, and said it was desirable that the discussion should take place in London with the participation of the Great Powers.

M. Sazonoff hoped that the British Government would assume the direction of these discussions. The whole of Europe would be thankful to them. It would be very important that Austria should meanwhile put a stop provisionally to her military action on Serbian territory.

On the following day, August 1, Sir Edward Grey wired to Sir M. de Bunsen, the British Ambassador in Vienna :

Count Mensdorff called again later at the Foreign Office. He informed me of a telegram sent yesterday to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at St. Petersburg by Count Berchtold, and gave me the substance.

It states that Count Berchtold begged the Russian Ambassador, whom he sent for yesterday, to do his best to remove the wholly erroneous impression in St. Petersburg that the ' door had been banged ' by Austria-Hungary on all further conversations. The Russian Ambassador promised to do this. Count Berchtold repeated on this occasion to the Russian Ambassador the assurance which had already been given at St. Petersburg, to the effect that neither an infraction of Serbian sovereign rights, nor the acquisition of Serbian territory was being contemplated by Austria-Hungary.

The sudden and complete *volte face* of Austria-Hungary showed that that country had become alarmed, and was anxious to climb down. Apparently the war would not have taken place had not the German Emperor sent his ultimatum to Russia on the very day when Austria-Hungary declared herself ready to discuss matters regarding Serbia. Study of the White Book reveals the fact that Russia strove earnestly, and with all her might, to avoid the war into which she was reluctantly forced. On July 30 Russia was ready to stop all her military preparations, for on that

day M. Sazonoff handed to the German Ambassador the following proposal, capable of securing peace :

If Austria, recognising that the conflict with Serbia has assumed character of question of European interest, declares herself ready to eliminate from her ultimatum points which violate principle of sovereignty of Serbia, Russia engages to stop all military preparations.

Unfortunately, the German Emperor would not wait. It seems that, at the last moment, the German Emperor could have preserved the peace had he cared to do so. Possibly he chose to go to war, because he feared that a peaceful settlement, after the previous demonstration of Germany's determination, would be condemned by his own subjects as another and a crowning failure of his blustering policy. Remembering the reproaches which had been levelled against him for having twice given way to France over Morocco, he thought it, perhaps, incumbent upon himself to avoid another and a greater diplomatic failure which would have been fatal to his prestige. At the moment when peace and war were in his hands, William the Second acted exactly as did Napoleon the Third, when at that fatal hour he would not be satisfied when the Prince of Hohenzollern withdrew his candidature to the Spanish throne which had caused the differences between France and Prussia. Striving to maintain his prestige at the cost of the greatest war which the world has seen, William the Second may well have ruined both his country and his dynasty.

CHAPTER VII

GERMANY AND TURKEY [1]

At Germany's bidding, Turkey has attacked the *Entente* Powers. If, as appears probable, the present war should end in the defeat of Germany and Austria-Hungary, we may take it that Turkey has committed suicide, or rather, has been compelled to do so.

Financially, militarily, and morally, Turkey is exhausted. She has recently lost two great wars. In her campaign with Italy she lost Tripoli, and in her struggle with the Balkan States she lost the bulk of her European possessions. As the latter are far more valuable than the former, it was only natural that many Turks desired to regain at least part of the lost Balkan territories if a good opportunity should arise. Immediately upon the outbreak of the present war Turkey began a general mobilisation. In view of her recent losses in Europe, it was permissible to assume that her preparations aimed at the reconquest of the provinces which had been conquered by Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, and Montenegro. As Bulgaria is Turkey's most immediate neighbour, her military preparations might conceivably be aimed at that State. Indeed, official Turkey explained that she was making ready for war in order to meet a possible attack from Bulgaria, which at the end of the Balkan War had lost Adrianople to the Turks. On August 4, the day when Great Britain declared war on

[1] From *The Fortnightly Review*, December 1914.

Germany, Mr. Beaumont, who at the time represented Sir L. Mallet, telegraphed to Sir Edward Grey :

Grand Vizier to-day renewed assurances that Turkey intends to observe strict neutrality. Mobilisation has been decided upon only because it would take months to complete, and because the Government wished not to be taken by surprise in case of aggression by Bulgaria, though they had also been alarmed by rumours of action by Russia —attributable, I think, to German Ambassador. Retention of German military mission meant nothing and had no political significance. He regarded them as Turkish employees who were doing good work, and as they had offered to remain, it would have been ungracious to refuse.

This communication, and those which are given in the following pages, are taken from the White Book, ' Events Leading to the Rupture of Relations with Turkey ' (Cd. 7268). According to a statement made by the Grand Vizier, the Turkish Prime Minister, to the British representative in Constantinople, Turkey's mobilisation was merely a measure of precaution, a defensive step directed principally against Bulgaria. The unveracity of this assertion was obvious. Far from fearing a Bulgarian attack, Turkey had apparently been negotiating with Bulgaria with a view to obtaining that country's aid in a war of revenge and of aggression. Soon afterwards it became clear that Turkey was mobilising at Germany's bidding against Russia, and perhaps against England as well. The *Goeben* and *Breslau* arrived at the Golden Horn on August 10. On the 21st of that month Sir L. Mallet telegraphed to Sir Edward Grey :

. . . Marshal Liman (von Sanders) and the German Ambassador are recklessly striving to force the Turks into declaring war on Russia, in which case the *Goeben* and *Breslau* would presumably sail for the Black Sea. They are prepared to achieve this object if necessary by a *coup d'état*, making the Minister of War dictator.

Six days later, on August 27, Sir L. Mallet sent to Sir Edward Grey a most remarkable forecast. He telegraphed :

German ships. There are grounds for thinking that Germans are urging Turks to send *Goeben* into Black Sea, where they would argue that she has a right to go as a Turkish ship. The Germans would count upon Russian warship attacking her, and war would ensue, seemingly provoked by Russia. Object of Germans is to create a diversion here, draw off some Russian troops and enemies from Austria and embroil us at the same time.

Two months and two days after the despatch of this telegram, on October 29, the event predicted took place. The Turks chose the anticipated pretext for their naval attack upon Russia. Rarely has a diplomatic forecast been more timely or more correct.

While, on August 27, Sir L. Mallet thought that the Germans, while planning a Turkish attack upon Russia, only intended ' to embroil us at the same time,' the English representative in Egypt recognised that Turkey was preparing to attack England in Egypt. On August 28, Mr. Cheetham, the British Agent in Cairo, telegraphed to Sir Edward Grey the following ominous news :

Ottoman forces are being mobilised in Hedjaz and farther south, and existing military activity in Red Sea may thus be explained. About sixty Turkish officers arrived at Alexandria recently and passed through Egypt down Red Sea. Their destination was the Yemen. Twelve thousand Turkish troops are reported in Jeddah region. Signs are not lacking that, in case of war, an attack on Egypt is contemplated by Turkey. A few Turkish officers are now in the Delta. Steps have been taken to watch all those that are known. I learn from a good source that all information of Turkish mobilisation reported from Constantinople is correct. Meanwhile, emissaries are being sent to India, the Yemen, Senoussi, and Egypt to stir up

feeling against Great Britain. Activity at Gaza is reported, but it is uncertain whether this is more than raising of levies to replace regulars withdrawn from the north by mobilisation.

Simultaneously with this telegram, which showed that a position very threatening to Great Britain in Egypt and beyond had suddenly arisen, there arrived in London a very disquieting telegram from Sir L. Mallet, dated likewise August 28, which informed Sir Edward Grey :

. . . Consignments of gold from Germany have arrived (at Constantinople) for German and Austrian banks. Private German residents have sent away their wives, and quantities of medical stores have been purchased and put on board German ships. I hear that German Ambassador is adopting tone of friendly commiseration for Great Britain, who, he asserts, will never assist Russia in any movement against Turkey. He has made the remarkable statement that his Government will now offer favourable terms to France, which she will certainly accept ; that Germany will then wage a platonic war with England, whose heart is not in the struggle, and who will make terms to save her Fleet ; and that Germany and England will then combine against Russia.

Day by day information received by the Foreign Office showed that Germany intrigued to involve Turkey simultaneously in a war with Russia and with England, and that an ever-growing stream of German arms and ammunition and of German gold was flowing towards the Golden Horn. On October 17 the British Ambassador telegraphed to Sir Edward Grey :

Since end of September following have reached Constantinople : Six thousand nine hundred cases of Mauser ammunition ; 540 cases of Mauser rifles ; thirteen trucks of war material ; and about £800,000 in bar gold. Arrival of a submarine in sections is expected shortly, and I am informed that such a consignment, together with two aeroplanes,

left Rustchuk on 8th October. Two German ships were recently escorted from Sulina by *Breslau*, and are reported to have brought submarine. But there is no evidence at present to prove this.

From day to day the position of affairs became more ominous and more threatening. While the Grand Vizier unceasingly assured the British Ambassador that only precautionary measures were taken, that Turkey contemplated no aggression, and that he had the situation perfectly under control, the mobilisation of the Turkish troops and their concentration on the Russian and Egyptian borders clearly showed that Turkey prepared everything for an early attack upon Russia in the Black Sea and upon Great Britain in Egypt. The Grand Vizier was either playing a double game or he was ignorant of the development of affairs. At any rate, it was obvious that his nominal subordinate, the notoriously philo-German War Minister, Enver Pasha, had taken matters into his own hands—that he was practically all-powerful. In view of the great and rapidly-increasing peril, Sir L. Mallet addressed, on September 23, the following most remarkable note of protest to the Grand Vizier :—

CONSTANTINOPLE, *September*, 23, 1914.

YOUR HIGHNESS,—

In the course of our interview of yesterday morning, I had the honour to inform your Highness of the anxiety that the news which reached me from Syria in regard to the military preparations and plots against Egypt now going on in that province was causing me. So long as it was a question of preparations similar to those made in other parts of the Empire as a consequence of the general mobilisation, I did not mention the matter to your Highness, although special importance might attach to all such doings in the neighbourhood of the Egyptian frontier. Similarly, I have been able up to the present to reject, as improbable tales, the rumours which have reached me from more than one

source, according to which a sudden blow directed against the Suez Canal was being planned with the object of rendering it impassable, although I am aware that the enemies of Great Britain are intriguing with the object of leading your Highness's Government into adventures as insensate and even more insensate, than this. I should, however, fail in my duty towards my Government, and, I may add also towards the Government of your Highness, if I did not bring to your Highness's knowledge the latest reports which have reached me. It appears from these reports that the minds of the Bedouins are being excited by professional agitators, who, encouraged by the Ottoman Government, are desirous of inflaming them against England. The military preparations which up to a certain moment bore a similar character to those in the other provinces of the Empire, have lately changed into a converging movement towards the south. Troops are being brought from such distant centres as Mosul. General activity reigns everywhere from Damascus to Maan, and cumulative evidence leads my consul at Jerusalem to the belief that an organised expedition against Egypt is in project for the next few days.

I trust that the reports, the contents of which I have just summed up to your Highness, put a wrong interpretation on facts which, as such, cannot be discussed. But I repeat that I should fail in my duty if I did not bring to your Highness's knowledge the grave pre-occupation which they cause me, and the impression which they make upon his Britannic Majesty's Government, and if I did not place you on your guard against the disastrous consequences which would ensue for your Highness's Government, if they were to follow a course so contrary to their own interests as that of becoming the accomplice of Germany in an attack upon Egypt.

Your Highness will remember that, at the beginning of the present war, Sir E. Grey instructed Mr. Beaumont to give you the assurance that, provided that Turkey maintained strict and absolute neutrality during the war, and so long as unforeseen circumstances did not arise, his

Britannic Majesty's Government had no desire nor intention of annexing Egypt, nor of modifying her *régime* in any way whatsoever. I had the honour to confirm this assurance to your Highness shortly after my return to Constantinople. Since then, being desirous of avoiding any possibility of misunderstanding with the Imperial Government, I have repeatedly called your Highness's attention to the conditional character of the assurances given by Sir E. Grey. Now, I hold it to be my duty to declare once more to your Highness that my Government take the most serious view of the unprecedented violations of neutrality already committed by the Turkish Government in retaining German officers and men on board the German warships, and by subsequently taking in their service numerous other Germans in a similar military capacity.

It does not seem to me necessary at this moment to recapitulate the details of still further departures from neutrality committed by Turkey in favour of the enemies of Great Britain. Nor need I insist on the consequences which might ensue if, to add the last touch to so grave a situation, my Government were to become convinced that the Imperial Government were seriously meditating an attack against Egypt, or that they were a party to disloyal intrigues against the security of the Suez Canal, or against the present *régime* in Egypt. Your Highness can judge of the whole importance and possible extent of these consequences.

I enclose in this note a memorandum enumerating in detail the facts which can be considered as indications of a forthcoming attack upon Egypt.

This dignified, powerful, impressive, and statesmanlike protest, which may serve as a model to future generations of diplomats, met with the dilatoriness and the evasions usual in Turkey. The British Ambassador's solemn warning remained unheeded. A month later, on October 23, Sir L. Mallet telegraphed to Sir Edward Grey:

I have seen the Russian Ambassador again this morning. He is sure that unless Turks mean to betray Germans, the

possibility of which he does not exclude, they will make war on Russia on receipt of first half of the sum of £4,000,000 which Germany is providing. It is concurrently reported about £1,000,000 has already arrived.

While at the beginning of the war it seemed possible that Germany might take Paris with a rush and defeat France and Russia on land, it must, by the end of October, have become obvious to every Turk endowed with common sense that the tide was turning, that Germany and Austria were likely to lose the war which they had so rashly begun.

It is true that the Turkish papers were day by day reporting glorious German and Austrian victories in the East and West. However, these mendacious reports could deceive only the ignorant populace of Constantinople. The Turkish Government, being kept constantly informed by its diplomatic and military representatives in Russia, France, and England about the position of affairs, knew no doubt that Fate was no longer favouring Germany and Austria-Hungary, that in a war of attrition the *Entente* Powers were likely to win. The fortune of war had visibly begun to turn. The German army had been defeated near Paris, and had hastily retreated towards the Belgian frontier, and the combined German aud Austrian armies had been defeated in front of Warsaw, and were rapidly withdrawing towards the West. Several official telegrams informed us that the Germans were at the time sending enormous amounts of gold to Constantinople. Of course, the Turks required money for paying their troops. Still, the unscrupulous and lavish way with which the representatives of Germany have endeavoured to bribe the officials and the Press in other countries, justifies one in concluding that Turkey's support of Germany at a moment when Germany's position had become compromised was due, perhaps, not so much to the blindness, the rashness, and the fanatic zeal

of some leading Turks, such as Enver Pasha, but to bribery. That only can explain what is otherwise inexplicable.

At a time when Turkey was nominally at peace with Russia and Great Britain, her army was mobilised and concentrated upon the Russian and Egyptian frontiers. Spies in Germany's pay swarmed through Egypt. Egyptian officers and civil servants were bribed. Endeavours were made to smuggle large quantities of explosives into Egypt. Enterprising parties for blowing up the Suez Canal were sent out by the Germans. All these preparations were undertaken in time of peace, and they were known not only to the British Foreign Office, but to various neutral Governments as well. Hence, it seems most regrettable and unfortunate that Roumania allowed vast quantities of German explosives, ammunition, arms, and other war-like stores, and numerous German military and naval officers and men, to pass unhindered through that country into Turkey.

Under Germany's guidance Turkey endeavoured to provoke Russia and England into an attack, so as to be able to appeal to the Mohammedans throughout the world for help against the aggressors. From many of the best-informed German writers we know that it was Germany's intention, in case of war with Great Britain, to raise the Mohammedans throughout the world against this country. The fact that that intention was to be found among the leaders of Germany's foreign policy may be seen from the statement which the German Emperor made at Damascus at the time of his pilgrimage to Jerusalem. At the occasion of a banquet in that town he solemnly assured 'the 300,000,000 Mohammedans throughout the world who venerate in the Turkish Sultan their Caliph, that the German Emperor would be their friend and protector for all time.'

As Turkey had not succeeded in provoking Russia and England into an attack by taking over the *Goeben* and

Breslau by means of a sham purchase, by vexing their trade, by concentrating large bodies of troops, transport animals, vehicles, and guns on the Russian and Egyptian frontiers, by engaging in the most reckless conspiracies directed against Russia and England, and by abolishing the capitulations and the foreign post offices established in Turkey, a final attempt was made upon Great Britain's patience by requesting her to withdraw from Egypt. The British Government was apprised of this incredible request in a telegram from Sir L. Mallet despatched on October 23, in which we read :

. . . My French colleague inquired (from the Minister of Marine) what was the meaning of preparations in Syria and of all the violent talk about Egypt. Minister of Marine replied that England was treating Egypt as if it belonged to her, whereas it formed part of Ottoman Dominions. Turks were indifferent about India, Tripoli, and Tunis, &c., but Egypt was on their frontier, and they felt about it as French did about Alsace-Lorraine. They would do nothing officially, but would shut their eyes to any agitation which was directed against English occupation of Egypt. Continuing, he referred to a proposal which he had made me a fortnight ago, to the effect that England and Turkey should now sign convention on lines of Drummond-Wolff Convention, providing for evacuation of Egypt by British troops at end of war. It is quite true he made this suggestion. I did not report it at the time because it was so entirely unpractical. This shows that Germans are turning all their attention to Egypt, and are inciting the Turks against us, so that we must expect to have a considerable amount of trouble on frontier. Turkish newspapers are full of Egypt just now, and of our high-handed proceedings. It is, *e.g.*, announced to-day that we have closed El Azhar mosque. There is no doubt that Germans are at bottom of this, and are inciting religious fanaticism of Turks against us.

We can scarcely wonder that the Turks were anxious to

regain Egypt. Under England's administration Egypt has once more become a wealthy country, and the Turk is a famous plunderer.

Nominally, Egypt was still a Turkish tributary State, and legally Turkey was perhaps entitled to regain full control of that country. However, morally Turkey had lost the right to rule Egypt, or indeed any other alien nation. The history of Turkey is a history of destruction and devastation. Wherever the Turk has gone he has ruined and ravaged. He has created nothing. In the Middle Ages the Turks succeeded in conquering the most flourishing lands of antiquity. The glorious empires of Babylonia, Assyria, Egypt, Phœnicia, Carthage, Persia, Greece, Palestine, and the Arab Empire, with the wonderful towns of Nineveh, Babylon, Cairo, Alexandria, Susa, Bagdad, Basra, Damascus, Athens, Jerusalem, &c., were one by one conquered by the Turks, and were uniformly converted into a wilderness. In antiquity, and even during part of the Middle Ages, Greece, Asia Minor, and the lands on the southern shore of the Mediterranean were the most densely populated countries in the world. As they have an excellent soil and climate, they ought to be still densely populated and flourishing. However, with the advent of the Turks a blight has fallen upon them. The great characteristic of the Turkish Empire is its desolation. How desolate it is may be seen from the fact that the wealthy lands ruled by the Turk contain per square mile only 30 inhabitants, while France has per square mile 189·5 inhabitants and Germany 310·4 inhabitants. In the times of antiquity the territory which is now under Turkey's sway supported probably from five to ten times as many people as it does at present. In ancient times and in the early Middle Ages Mesopotamia was the granary of the world. It was a most fruitful and most densely populated land. Bagdad had 2,000,000 inhabitants. Arts and sciences flourished. A most wonderful system of canals irrigated that naturally dry country, but the

Turks destroyed the canal system, which had painfully been built up during thousands of years. At present the former granary of the world is a desert and a wilderness. Per square mile there are only fourteen people in Mesopotamia. If, under a civilised government, Mesopotamia should once more be provided with an efficient irrigation system—it can easily be re-created—it will probably once more have room for very many millions of people.

The Turks have exterminated civilised nations by the sword, by the neglect and destruction of public works, and by confiscation. The ancient centres of civilisation where the Turks settled declined and became mere sites covered with ruins, upon which sordid villages arose. It is difficult to realise nowadays that in the Middle Ages Bagdad was by far the largest, the wealthiest, and the most highly civilised town in the world, the greatest centre of commerce, industry, art, science, and learning; or that Athens, Belgrade, Bucharest, and Sofia were only recently, when under Turkish rule, dirty and poverty-stricken villages. Those Turkish towns which are flourishing owe their prosperity solely to the non-Turkish population. Constantinople is prosperous owing to its unrivalled geographical position, which even Turkish misgovernment cannot destroy, and to West European, Greek, and Armenian business men. Smyrna is a purely Greek town. As the Turks have invariably brought ruin and misery to the most prosperous countries which they had conquered, and as misgovernment and cruelty have been characteristic of their rule over all alien nations which had the misfortune to fall under their sway, from the time of Sultan Othman to the present day, Turkey has no moral right either to rule over foreign nations or to retain any longer naturally wealthy districts which can nourish a large and happy population. They have misused their trust. These barbarians have no right to retain any longer the holy places of three leading religions and most of the ancient centres of European civilisation.

In the past Great Britain has been Turkey's best friend. While Russia and Austria-Hungary attacked the Turks and wrested from them their territories piece by piece, Great Britain consistently endeavoured to preserve Turkey's independence and integrity and to bring at the same time justice and good government to the unhappy peoples living under Turkish rule. With this twofold object in view she defended Turkey diplomatically and by force of arms. At the same time, she urged Turkey unceasingly to reform her methods of government. Turkey has shown, like an old and hardened criminal, that she is not reformable. She has lately changed her constitution, but the character of her blood-stained Government has remained the same. She has been, and is still, governed by a cruel and unlimited despotism which acts without faith, without conscience, and without pity. Turkey's hour has struck.

The present war is a war against German militarism and a war of liberation. If it should end in a victory for the Allied Powers, it should not merely lead to the freeing of the subjected and oppressed Poles, Southern Slavs, Roumanians, &c., in Europe, but also to the freeing of the nationalities who live under Turkish tyranny in Asia. The Turkish Empire resembles Austria-Hungary. It is inhabited by people of numerous races and of ten religions, and the non-Turkish races are fearfully misgoverned and cruelly ill-treated. Near the Russian border dwell large numbers of Armenians, among whom the Turks have perpetrated numerous massacres in the time of Abdul Hamid. The coastal districts of Asia Minor are inhabited by millions of Greeks, who dwell in dense masses along the shore of the Ægean Sea. They are the descendants of the ancient Greeks who settled in Asia Minor in the time of ancient Troy. They are the most industrious and most prosperous inhabitants of Asiatic Turkey. After the Balkan War the Turks began to drive scores of thousands of these Greeks from their prosperous homes by violence and massacre. The Greeks

and Armenians are anxious to rid themselves of the Turkish yoke. Greece wishes to expand and to join to the motherland the ancient Greek colonies on the coast of Asia Minor sung by Homer.

Among the dissatisfied nationalities dwelling in Asiatic Turkey the Arabs occupy a most important position. They have had a great past. In the Middle Ages, under the Ommiades and Abbasides, they ruled a world empire. Their sway extended from the Persian Gulf through Southern Europe and North Africa into Morocco and Spain. They were not merely a nation of conquerors. They were by far the most civilised nation of the period. They were most advanced in philosophy, literature, mathematics, architecture, engineering, medicine, chemistry, the manufacturing industries, commerce, shipping, &c. The Turks adopted the Arab religion, but they destroyed the civilisation of the creators of the Alhambra. The 12,000,000 Arabs are no longer willing to bear the Turkish yoke and to provide the bulk of the taxes and the majority of Turkey's soldiers. They have begun to demand freedom for themselves. They, and many non-Turkish Mohammedans, are no longer willing to see the holy places of Islam exploited and defiled by a band of usurpers. The Arab nation may once more attain independence, if not greatness. Some years ago Negib-Azourg Bey published a book, 'Le Réveil de la Nation Arabe dans l'Asie Turque.' It contains a manifesto to the enlightened nations of Europe and America, in which the National Committee of Turkish Arabs accuses the Turks of the devastation of the glorious countries ruled by the Ommiades and Abbasides, and asks the world for sympathy and support. The Allied Powers should support the claims to freedom of the oppressed Armenians, Greeks, and Arabs. Among the direct descendants of the Prophet there are no doubt men of non-Turkish nationality who have a stronger claim to be the protectors of the holy places of Islam than has the Sultan of Turkey.

As the Turks have had three months to prepare for their aggression, their defeat may not be easy. At the same time, Turkey's power of resistance should not be over-estimated. Turkey is, after all, only a small country. She has 21,273,900 inhabitants. She is very poor. Most of her citizens are profoundly dissatisfied. In her last wars she has lost vast quantities of arms and ammunition, and enormous numbers of men, and as she has only a few railways and scarcely any roads, she has to overcome very great difficulties in raising, concentrating, equipping, and arming large bodies of men. Besides, Turkey is vulnerable in many parts.

The downfall of Turkey may raise the question of Constantinople. Very possibly the Germans induced Turkey to attack England and Russia, not only for strategical, but also for diplomatic reasons. They hoped, no doubt, that the question of Constantinople would lead to disagreement among the Allies.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GERMAN COLONIAL EMPIRE [1]

MANY people who are insufficiently acquainted with the German colonies have in the past described them as small and valueless. They are neither the one nor the other. Small and large, valuable and valueless are terms of comparison. Comparatively speaking, the German colonies are not small, and they are not without actual and prospective value.

The extent of the German Colonial Empire will be seen from the following figures:

	Square Miles.
Togo	33,700
Kamerun	292,000
South-West Africa	322,450
East Africa	384,180
	1,032,330
Kiauchau	200
New Guinea and Pacific Islands	96,160
	1,128,690

The German Empire embraces 208,780 square miles, France extends to 207,076 square miles, Austria-Hungary has 261,030 square miles, Italy 110,623 square miles, Spain 196,173 square miles and the United Kingdom 121,633

[1] From *The Fortnightly Review*, August 1915.

square miles. The German Colonial Empire is more than nine times as large as the United Kingdom. It is a little larger than Germany, France, Austria-Hungary, Italy, Spain, and Great Britain combined, and it is somewhat larger than the whole of Argentina. The Union of South Africa contains 473,100 square miles and Rhodesia 439,575 square miles. Germany's African possessions alone are therefore considerably larger than the Cape Province, Natal, the Transvaal, the Orange Free State, and Rhodesia combined.

The value of land of all kinds, and especially of very extensive land, of vast colonies, cannot be ascertained by ordinary commercial principles, by the question what will it fetch in the market, what does it produce, what profits does it yield? The value of land is actual and potential. Lands possessed by a nation have, furthermore, not only an actual and prospective economic value, but a strategic value as well. Economically, Gibraltar, Malta, and many other important points are worth very little, or are a positive burden, to the Empire, because the cost of their upkeep is greater than the income which they yield. Nevertheless other nations would gladly purchase from Great Britain some of her economically valueless possessions at a very high price.

Let us first of all consider the economic value of the German Colonial Empire.

Land of all kinds has an actual and prospective value. An unwholesome morass near a large town may become invaluable building land some years hence after having been drained. Arid desert territories in Arizona and New Mexico, which a few years ago were valueless and were considered unusable for any purpose, have been turned into bounteous agricultural land and orchards by means of irrigation. A few decades ago, the ground containing the Kimberley diamond mines and the gold mines of the Rand could be bought at the price of inferior

agricultural and pastoral land. A century and a half ago, when France lost Canada to England, Voltaire wondered that great and intelligent nations should go to war for ' quelques arpents de neige.' At present Canada contains many more inhabitants than the three greatest departments of France, the departement de la Seine with Paris, the departement du Nord with Lille and Roubaix, and the departement Pas de Calais. When France evacuated Canada a few thousand Frenchmen were left behind. Their number has increased to more than three millions. At the present moment there are actually more Frenchmen of Canadian extraction than live in Paris itself. The time will probably come when the population of Canada will be very much greater than that of France within its present limits.

One of the most remarkable features of modern times has been the expansion of the European race. In 1800 less than 10,000,000 white men lived outside Europe. At present the number of white men outside Europe approaches 150,000,000. The time undoubtedly will come when the majority of people of the white race will live on the spacious continents across the sea. In 1800 the United States had only 4,300,000 white inhabitants, Canada was peopled by about 200,000 white men, and the Australian continent contained only 6500 whites. Steam, steel, and electricity have reduced to a minimum the enormous distances of the past. It is now easier to go to Canada or Africa than it was formerly to go to Scotland or Ireland. Improved communications have opened up continents which formerly were inaccessible and were believed to be closed to civilisation for all time. The opening up of the extra-European continents has only begun. The time will come when vast territories which are still inaccessible can be as easily reached as Toronto and Vancouver.

Formerly people were deterred from emigrating not only through distances but also through the rigour of an inhospitable climate and through the strange and fearful

diseases which are usually found in countries uninhabited by white men. It is a curious fact that the advent of civilisation leads not only to a great improvement in sanitation, but to an improvement of climate as well. In the time of Julius Cæsar, Switzerland, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and England were considered to possess so inhospitable a climate that they were thought fit only for savages. The climate of these countries has been enormously improved by the labour of man, by the cutting down of forests, by the draining of swamps, and especially by agriculture. The countries of northern Europe possess undoubtedly a far more genial climate than they did in olden times. The meteorological departments of California and Utah have found that from year to year the rainfall in these drought-stricken territories increases and that it increases particularly in those portions where agriculture is most actively pursued. Europe and Asia are in large parts greatly overcrowded. The population of the world continues, rapidly increasing. Consequently, land suitable for the settlement of white men becomes from year to year more precious, especially as the improvement of communications makes colonial land from year to year more accessible, and as the advances of civilisation and of sanitation make life in the far-off colonies more healthful and more pleasant.

The German colonies lie, as a glance at the map will show, in the tropical and sub-tropical zones. They lie on latitudes which are usually considered unfit for the habitation of white men. However, large portions of German South-West Africa and of German East Africa lie at so high an altitude above the sea that the climate is moderate, bracing, and extremely healthful. Although German East Africa lies on the equator, the table lands in the interior, like those of neighbouring Uganda, are perfectly suitable for the settlement of white men. According to German Government memoirs a territory as large as Prussia in that colony

is fit for the permanent habitation of white men. German South-West Africa, which is German no longer, lies on the same latitude as the Orange Free State, the Transvaal, Northern Natal, and Southern Rhodesia. Large portions of that colony lie also at a high altitude and are climatically susceptible to dense settlement by white men. The white men of the Empire will undoubtedly find a large additional outlet in German Africa. The time may come when the superabundant inhabitants of the South African Union will overflow into Rhodesia and into South-West Africa and eventually into German East Africa as well.

The German colonies are frequently considered valueless by those who regard merely present values. Land is always a speculative purchase. Men who buy land look to future prices. With the progress of civilisation, with the increase of population, land will become more and more valuable, not only in the moderate zones, but in the tropical and sub-tropical zones as well. From year to year the over-populated territories of Europe and of Asia are less able to support themselves with the produce of their own territories. From year to year they have to go further afield in search of foreign food and raw materials, and with the improvement of communications and the lowering of freights, countries which formerly exported little are becoming more and more important factors in the household of over-populated Europe and of over-populated Asia. When inland communication in colonial countries was limited to transport by human carriers and pack animals, and when shipping freights were very high, only the most valuable and the least bulky produce could be despatched from the far-off colonies to Europe and from Europe to far-off lands. At that time the most valuable articles of commerce were spices, precious stones, pearls, gold, silver, silk, and to these were added later on tea, coffee, cocoa, tobacco, sugar, and other luxuries. In these times the spice islands and the

sugar islands were considered the most valuable possessions. Countries which produced timber, ore, and grain, such as Canada, the northern States of America, and Argentina were considered worthless. From year to year the tropics are yielding larger quantities of food and raw materials to the over-populated districts of the world. Vast quantities of timber, ores and metals, of animal and vegetable fats, of cotton, coffee, cocoa, rubber, &c., are exported thence. The tropics possess an inexhaustible soil. They are nature's hothouse. The exploitation of the tropical and sub-tropical countries has scarcely begun. The marvellous developments of the rubber industry shows how wonderfully the productivity of these countries can be increased.

Hitherto the German colonies have produced little, not because they are naturally poor, but because they were new colonies and because they were unskilfully exploited by a Government which did not understand the management of colonies. A nation which desires to develop new colonies must open them up. It can open them up either by private enterprise, as is done in this country, or by State action. The German Government did neither. It distrusted private enterprise. It feared that private men might corner or squander the natural resources of the colonies. Consequently it did not throw open its colonies to the business men of the world, and not even to the German business men. Everything had to be done methodically. Regulations for every possible contingency were drafted. The land was measured, explored, and described. Colonial statistics and colonial law codes were produced. The activities of all desiring to exploit the colonies had to be minutely regulated. The direction of all the colonial activities was jealously retained by the officials in Berlin. If a business man went to the colonies he found that he could not begin operations. If he wished to trade with the natives, to build railways and roads, to prospect for gold or copper, to farm, to grow rubber or cotton, he had to apply for

official permission. Months and years had to be spent in disheartening endeavours to convince the authorities of the necessity of giving men a free scope, of allowing them to go ahead. Many Germans spent their all endeavouring to get to work, and, being constantly hampered by insurmountable regulations, at last gave up in despair and returned to Germany heartbroken and ruined.

As the Government did not allow private men to go ahead, and as the Reichstag refused to vote sufficient funds for railway construction, &c., the colonies languished for a long time, stifled by red tape. At last, about a decade ago, a new spirit arose. The Government still refused private people permission to open up and exploit the colonies in the English style, but it began opening them up by means of State roads and railways. The progress made during the last few years may be visualised by the following table:

RAILWAYS IN THE GERMAN COLONIES

	Kilometres.
In 1894	14
In 1896	40
In 1898	102
In 1900	234
In 1902	466
In 1904	479
In 1906	1,350
In 1908	1,988
In 1910	2,721
In 1912	3,867

Germany acquired her African colonies in 1884 and 1885. Within ten years she had constructed only fourteen kilometres, or eight miles, of railway for a territory many times larger than the whole of Germany! The railway mileage continued increasing in a ridiculously slow and inadequate manner up to the time when a great rising in the South-West

African colony clearly demonstrated the necessity of more railways, and until Herr Dernburg, an able and energetic business man, became Colonial Secretary. In 1912 the gigantic African possessions of Germany combined did not have as many miles of railway as had little Switzerland or Western Australia or Rhodesia.

Absence of railways has been largely responsible for the unsatisfactory position of the German colonies. With the increase of railway construction these colonies have rapidly advanced, and their progress shows that they possess great possibilities. The progress of the German colonies may best be seen by two tests: by their income from taxation and by their exports. Between 1903 and 1913 the yield of the taxes of East Africa has increased in round figures from £180,000 to £690,000; that of Kamerun from £100,000 to £450,000; that of Togo from £55,000 to £170,000; that of South-West Africa from £110,000 to £795,000. The increase in the income furnished by the German colonies is very gratifying. During the last ten years, during which the Government has begun building railways with some energy, the taxes provided by the colonies have grown between four- and five-fold. Since 1903 the exports of the German African and of the Pacific colonies have grown as follows:

	Exports from German African Colonies.	Exports from German Pacific Colonies.
1903	£1,084,000	£194,000
1904	£1,041,000	£196,000
1905	£1,172,000	£220,000
1906	£1,276,000	£282,000
1907	£1,796,000	£262,000
1908	£1,886,000	£436,000
1909	£2,913,000	£567,000
1910	£4,132,000	£910,000
1911	£4,075,000	£821,000

If we wish to estimate correctly the economic value of the German colonies we must not only consider their present value but their future possibilities. We must bear in mind that the development of these vast territories has only begun and has been badly begun.

The official export statistics will tell us something of the productions of the various colonies. East Africa exports chiefly rubber, hides and skins, sisal hemp, copra, ivory, and gold ore. Kamerun exports chiefly rubber, palm kernels and palm oil, cocoa, ivory, and timber. Togo exports chiefly palm kernels and palm oil, rubber, raw cotton, and cocoa. South-West Africa exports chiefly diamonds, copper ore, lead, and hides and skins. The development of plantations has only begun, but already highly gratifying results have been achieved. Experiments on a considerable scale have shown that the German African colonies can furnish vast quantities of excellent cotton, cocoa, coffee, tobacco, bananas, rubber, &c. Herr Dernburg repeatedly stated that he believed that ultimately Germany might draw the bulk of the cotton, coffee, cocoa, rice, tobacco, palm oil and palm kernels which she needs from her colonies. The German planters were certainly extremely optimistic as to the possibilities of their industries, provided the Government created the necessary facilities and gave them a free hand.

How much the German colonies have been held back by Government red tape may be seen by the fact that South-West Africa's mineral production is extremely small, although it is a highly mineralised country. The diamonds which are found there are very small, but they are of excellent quality. They do not occur in pipes as at Kimberley and elsewhere, but are picked up in the sand. Prospectors have tried to locate the pipe or pipes from which they came, but they have not yet succeeded in finding their origin. The small but precious diamonds are found in an extensive territory. Consequently theft is easy and supervision is

difficult. Nevertheless the Government in its wisdom imposed so heavy a tax on diamonds that smuggling on a large scale is known to have taken place. According to the official figures the diamond exports from South-West Africa come to about £1,300,000 per year. Very possibly the illicit exports are equally large, if not larger. The copper and lead mines of the country have hitherto yielded little, owing to the Government's misplaced economy on the one hand and to its policy of strangulation on the other. As soon as South-West Africa and the other German colonies are thrown open to the enterprising and the industrious, and are administered in a reasonable and generous manner as are the other English colonies, a wonderful development will take place. Their production will increase many fold in a few years.

The German bureaucracy has not only hampered the colonists with innumerable vexatious restrictions, but has at the same time overburdened them with taxes. Animated by the ambition to create model colonies, to show the world how to colonise, German officials have tried to create another Germany in the wilds. Magnificent and substantial but empty towns have been laid out, huge schools and public buildings have been erected, monuments and statues have been raised, parks and public gardens have been created. Money was wasted in every direction on unnecessary ostentation, and a huge body of officials was maintained so that everybody should be registered and labelled, that everything in the German colonies should be exactly as in Germany. The public buildings in the budding German colonies are among the finest in the world.

To develop colonies two factors are required: accessibility and labour. The German Government, until recently, did not understand the importance of either. It neglected the building of railways and at the same time exterminated the natives. The German Government embarked somewhat half-heartedly upon colonisation. Men who had disgraced

themselves in Germany and who had become impossible in their own country were given official positions in the colonies. Many of the early administrators were brutes and drunkards who disgraced themselves by the most infamous illtreatment of the natives. Several of these men, such as Messrs. Leist, Wehlan, Peters, and Prince Arenberg, have acquired European notoriety. The Imperial Government winked at the misdeeds of its official representatives. Peters was dismissed in 1897 for fearful cruelty, but was reinstated in 1905. German barbarity and inhumanity naturally led to the revolt of the natives and this to their slaughter by their taskmasters. In all colonies great massacres occurred. That policy was particularly fatal to South-West Africa, Germany's richest colony. There, as in other parts of Africa, German representatives found quarrelling negro tribes, and they insinuated themselves by offering to some of the chiefs protection against their enemies. Treaties of protection were concluded. Protection was paid for by the cession of vast stretches of valuable land, but when the natives asked for protection in accordance with the wording of the treaty it was often refused to them. Treaties between Germany and the natives were amended by new paragraphs whereby further stretches of land were taken from them without their consent. Instead of protecting them against their enemies as they had promised, the Germans sometimes furnished the natives with arms and afterwards demanded that these arms should be given up again. When the natives resisted, as was only natural, war was made on them without mercy, and their property was taken. In consequence of that policy and of the cruelties and extortions practised with impunity by numerous individual traders, South-West Africa was frequently in a state of war. In 1893 and 1894 Germany was at war with the Hottentots under Hendrik Witboi. In 1896 the Khauas Hottentots and Hereros revolted. During 1897 and 1898 Germany fought the Zwartbooi

Hottentots. In 1903 the Bondelzwarts rose. In 1904 a great rising of the Hereros occurred. It took the German Government three years to subdue them by a military force which at one time approximated 20,000, and the campaign cost about £20,000,000. Before this terrible campaign South-West Africa, which is more than 50 per cent. larger than the whole German Empire, was, according to official estimates, inhabited by 200,000 natives. According to the latest official figures there are at present in South-West Africa only 82,000 natives. During three years of war more than half the natives were exterminated. As some of the native tribes did not rise, the Hereros were the chief sufferers. They almost disappeared. Men of all ages, women and children were slaughtered or driven into the waterless desert, where they died of thirst. The character of Germany's campaign will become apparent from a proclamation of the Commander-in-Chief, General von Trotha, issued on October 2, 1904, which was worded as follows :

I, the great General of the German soldiers, send this letter to the Herero nation. The Hereros are no longer German subjects. They have murdered and robbed, they have cut off the ears and noses and other members of wounded soldiers, and now they are too cowardly to fight. Therefore, I say to the people : Whosoever brings one of the chiefs as a prisoner to one of my stations shall receive 1000 marks, and for Samuel Maherero I will pay 5000 marks. The Herero nation must now leave the country. If the people do it not, I will compel them with the big gun. Within the German frontier, every Herero with or without a rifle, with or without cattle, will be shot. I will not take over any more women and children, but I will either drive them back to their people or have them fired on. These are my words to the nation of the Hereros.

The great General of the mighty Emperor,

Von Trotha.

Owing to the cruelty and folly of the German Government and its colonial representatives innumerable natives have been killed, and South-West Africa has suffered particularly through the reduction of native workers. After the war the Germans endeavoured to increase the population from the neighbouring countries. Many Boers were attracted to South-West Africa by lavish promises, but they did not like the dictatorial ways of the officials and the bureaucratic restrictions which circumscribed their activities in every direction, and they left very soon. The Germans had acquired so bad a reputation through their ill-treatment of natives that many natives left South-West Africa, and the natives of the surrounding countries refused to work on German territory.

South-West Africa is an ideal country for raising sheep, goats, and cattle. According to a statement made by Professor Hahn, of Capetown University, before the German Budget Commission, South-West Africa had 2,000,000 cattle, but their number was greatly reduced by the rinderpest. According to him the south of the colony is as favourable for raising sheep and goats as is Cape Colony. The animals kept in South-West Africa have increased during the last few years at a remarkabiy rapid rate. Between 1907 and 1912 cattle have increased from 52,531 to 171,784, wool sheep from 3526 to 46,901, other sheep from 98,069 to 440,000, goats from 99,663 to 448,279. Lately the raising of ostriches has been begun. However, farming, the raising of animals, and the pursuit of mining have been severely hampered by the absence of native workers. The fact that notwithstanding the scarcity of native labour, numerous devastating wars, absence of railways, and innumerable governmental restrictions, South-West Africa has developed as rapidly as it has done, that taxation and exports have enormously increased in a short number of years, proves that the country is a valuable one, and that its possibilities are very great. That impression is con-

firmed by the emigration of Germans to South-West Africa. South-West Africa contained on January 1, 1912, 12,135 Germans, of whom 2533 were military and police. In other words, it had almost 10,000 *bona fide* German inhabitants, or more than twice as many as all the other German colonies combined.

The absence of natives has great disadvantages, but it has also great compensating advantages. The scarcity of natives compelled the Germans to treat South-West Africa more or less as a white man's land. The German farmers who have settled in the country have shown that white men can work there. Possibly South-West Africa may remain a white man's land, containing a few thousand natives, possibly numerous native labourers will be introduced. At any rate, the authorities will have the great advantage of an almost empty country, where they can do more or less what they like without fear of race friction and of native risings. That is a very unusual position in South Africa, and it may lead to some exceedingly valuable experiments.

The present value of the German colonies may be small. They have caused a yearly loss to Germany because the home Government simultaneously stifled private enterprise and spent money lavishly in the colonies on unnecessary officials, on costly buildings, and on railways and other undertakings which private capital might have provided. As soon as the German colonies are freed from their German shackles and as soon as peace has returned they will be self-supporting, and before long they should be exceedingly flourishing. After all, one must look at colonies and possessions, not from the narrow point of the individual, who lives only for a short number of years, but from that of the nation and the race which should live for ever, Canada, Australia, and South Africa, which were almost worthless a century and a half ago, are now the most valuable assets of the British race. It would have been the greatest

calamity to the race if these vast territories had fallen into other hands. The German colonies may appear to be of little value at the moment, and their present commercial value may be small, but a century and a half hence they also may become priceless assets of the nation and the race. Statesmen, in considering values, must not apply to them the short-sighted views of a private man, who desires that he and his children should financially benefit by his acquisitions. They must look at territories from the point of view of the nation and race, which should be immortal.

The German colonies possess not only a substantial immediate and a very large future economic value. They are at the same time exceedingly important from the strategical point of view. Modern Germany has not grown naturally, almost automatically, like a tree, like the British Empire. It has been made by great warrior-monarchs; it has grown by conquest. Modern Germany has been created, not by statesmen, but by soldiers. Bismarck had high military talents. His policy was a military policy, He pursued his diplomatic campaigns from the military point of view, and military considerations largely influenced his colonial policy as well. He was a conqueror. His aim and that of his successors was not merely to create and maintain struggling colonies on the west coast and the east coast of Africa, but to acquire all South Africa for Germany. From Bismarck's conversations and numerous confidential letters we know that he wished Germany to stretch out a hand towards the Boers, and to expel the British from South Africa with their assistance. His attempts at effecting military settlements in Africa began soon after the Franco-German War and many years before Germany acquired her first colony.

It was Germany's plan to link up her colonies in West Africa and in East Africa, and thus to isolate the Cape and to get into direct contact with the Transvaal. That

attempt was prevented by Cecil Rhodes. Rhodesia was made to separate German South-West Africa from German East Africa. The development of Rhodesia and of the other British territories lying east of German South-West Africa was greatly hampered, because no direct outlet to the sea could be secured by way of the German territory. The expulsion of Germany from her African colonies will stimulate and facilitate the development of the neighbouring English and other colonies. Last, but not least, the acquisition of the German colonies will free the British possessions of great dangers. From South-West Africa the neighbouring British possessions could be threatened. For many years intrigues were carried on in which South-West Africa was to serve as a German base of attack. Strategical railways were built suitable for an attack on the Cape; troops were demonstratively collected; the soldiers who had fought against the Hereros were settled in the country. Germany's occupation of South-West Africa was no doubt in part responsible for the Boer War.

If South-West Africa had remained German, a prosperous and populous colony would have arisen. Another Germany, another nation in arms, would have been created close to Cape Colony. All South Africa would have become an armed camp. Germany would have endeavoured to accumulate in South-West Africa vast stores of arms and ammunition, which, in case of war, might have been handed over either to German reservists from South America and elsewhere who might have been sent to that colony or to the natives for use against the British settlers. That danger is gone. General Botha's campaign was extremely difficult and very glorious. In future years it would have been infinitely more difficult, and it would have cost untold lives and hundreds of millions. The successful campaign against South-West Africa is extremely valuable, because General Botha's victory has destroyed a centre of intrigue and unrest whence mischief might have been done, not only

in South Africa, but in all parts of the British and of the French colonial empires. Had South-West Africa not been taken the natives in Asia and in Africa would have been told that Germany was dominating Africa ; that she would drive the English and French out of the country ; that, at any rate, France and England were there by Germany's permission. The conflagration might have spread much farther.

CHAPTER IX

EXPOSÉ DU GOUVERNEMENT PRUSSIEN DES PRINCIPES SUR LESQUELS IL ROULE, AVEC QUELQUES RÉFLEXIONS POLITIQUES[1]

Pour se faire une idée générale de ce gouvernement il faut examiner en détail toutes les branches du gouvernement, et puis les combiner ensemble.

Je commence par les finances, qui sont comme les nerfs dans le corps humain, qui font mouvoir tous les membres.

Depuis la guerre, les revenus de l'État ont été prodigieusement augmentés, savoir: d'un million deux cent mille écus par l'acquisition de la Pomérellie, un million de tabac, cent mille de la banque, cinquante mille du bois, quatre cent mille des accises et péages, cent trente mille du sel de Schönebeck, cinquante-six mille du loto, au delà de deux cent mille écus par les nouveaux taux des bailliages, cent mille écus des bois; de sorte qu'à présent le total des revenus monte à vingt et un millions sept cent mille écus, dont, outre toutes les autres dépenses de l'État acquittées, cent quatre-vingt-sept mille soldats sont entretenus. Les dépenses décomptées, il reste tous les ans cinq millions sept cent mille écus, dont jusqu'ici deux millions ont été annuellement déposés dans le trésor, et trois millions sept cent mille écus ont été employés, soit aux fortifications, soit aux améliorations du pays, soit pour réparer des malheurs, ainsi qu'en subsides pour les Russes et en bâtiments. Mais

[1] This is the famous political testament of 1776.

la destination de ces cinq millions sept cent mille, en temps de guerre, est pour payer les extraordinaires des campagnes, qui montent chaque année à onze millions, de sorte que, cinq millions sept cent mille decomptés, reste à ajouter annuellement la somme de cinq millions trois cent mille écus. Cette somme doit être prise du trésor, qui est fourni de dix-neuf millions trois cent mille écus, outre quatre millions trois cent mille écus, ce qu'on appelle le petit trésor destiné à rendre l'armée mobile. Nous avons encore, d'ailleurs, quatre millions deux cent mille à Breslau, tout prêts pour acheter et ammasser les fourrages pour une armée de soixante mille hommes, et neuf cent mille dans la banque pour acheter du fourrage pour six semaines à Magdebourg ; en outre, la caisse de guerre doit avoir onze millions pour pouvoir payer en temps de guerre les regiments d'avance ; quatre millions s'y trouvent déjà, les autres y seront dans trois ans. Mais il faut remarquer que si l'on veut puiser tous les extraordinaires de guerre du trésor, on ne pourra durer que quatre campagnes, ce qui fait que de nécessité il faut s'emparer de la Saxe, ménager le plus que l'on peut le trésor, qui ne doit servir proprement qu'à remplir le vide de quelques provinces envahies par l'ennemi. Voilà le fond des choses, qui démontre qu'il faut user de la plus grande économie pour avoir le dernier écu en poche lorsqu'on négocie la paix. Cet argent, ces deux millions qui sortent tous les ans de la circulation en entrant dans le trésor, paraîtront une somme très-considerable ; mais ce qui justifie cette opération, c'est que la balance de commerce est en faveur de l'État de quatre millions quatre cent mille écus, de sorte que la circulation des espèces augmente encore dans le public annuellement de deux millions quatre cent mille écus. Cette balance était contre la Prusse à la mort du feu roi, où la monarchie perdait annuellement cinq cent mille écus par les importations. J'ai trouvé moyen, en établissant beaucoup de manufactures, et surtout à l'aide de la Silésie, de la mettre sur

l'état que je viens d'annoncer. C'est pourquoi il ne faut pas perdre les manufactures de vue ; par leur moyen, cette balance peut encore s'augmenter dans nos possessions actuelles de quelques cent mille écus. Mais ce qui importe surtout, c'est de conserver le bon ordre établi maintenant pour la régie des deniers publics et la surveillance sur toutes les caisses ; sans quoi le peuple paye beaucoup et le souverain est volé.

Des Magasins

Il y a ici un magasin de trente six mille winspels, dont on peut nourrir un an une armée de soixante mille hommes ; il y a un magasin pareil en Silésie pour le même nombre de troupes, et d'ailleurs un fonds de deux millions pour acheter des grains de la Pologne ; ce qui pourra fournir cent vingt mille winspels, par le moyen desquels le pays sera à l'abri de toute famine, et, en cas de guerre, avec le blé qu'il y a déjà, on aura de quoi faire trois campagnes.

De Wartenberg

Wartenberg a tous les ans quatre cent quarante mille écus d'épargne, qui sont employés en partie pour les armes, pour augmenter son dépôt, en partie pour l'artillerie, dont on a construit les canons pour la nouvelle forteresse de Silésie, et une réserve, à laquelle on travaille encore à présent, de quatre cents canons de réserve pour la campagne.

De l'Armée

La situation de cet État nous oblige d'entretenir beaucoup de troupes, car nos voisins sont l'Autriche, la Russie, la France et la Suède. Le pied de guerre est de deux cent vingt mille hommes, y compris les bataillons francs et l'augmentation dans la cavalerie. De ce nombre on pourra

mettre en campagne cent quatre-vingt mille hommes ; mais dès qu'il faut former trois armées, il saute aux yeux que nous n'en avons pas trop en comparaison de nos voisins. Je crois que la discipline doit rester sur le pied où elle se trouve, ainsi que les évolutions introduites, à moins que la guerre ne change, car alors il n'y a de parti qu'à se plier aux circonstances et à changer avec elles ; mais pour égaler les enemies ou les surpasser il faut que ce soit par l'ordre et par la discipline, encourager les officiers et les distinguer, pour qu'une noble émulation les porte à surpasser leurs adversaires qu'il ont à combattre. Si le souverain ne se mêle pas lui-même du militaire, et s'il n'en donne pas l'exemple, tout est fini. Si l'on prefère les fainéants de cour au militaire, on verra que tout le monde préférera cette fainéantise au laborieux métier des armes, et alors, au lieu que nos officiers sont nobles, il faudra avoir recours aux roturiers, ce qui serait le premier pas vers la décadence et la chute de l'armée. Nous n'avons à présent que soixante-dix citoyens par compagnie ; il ne faut point s'écarter de ce principe, pour ménager le pays, qui, par l'augmentation de la population, pourra fournir des ressources ou recrues, si la guerre le rend nécessaire. Les forteresses sont en bon état, à l'exception de Stettin, dont le plan est tout fait. Il faudrait miner toute l'enceinte de Magdebourg. La partie dans laquelle nous sommes le plus faibles est celle du génie. Il nous faudrait encore trente bons officiers ingénieurs ; mais la difficulté est de les trouver. Les mineurs sont bons. Il faudrait également augmenter le nombre des quartiers-maîtres, parce que, supposé trois armées, leur service demande plus d'habiles gens que nous n'en avons. Notre population est de cinq millions deux cent mille âmes, dont quatre-vingt-dix mille à peu près sont soldats. Cette proportion peut aller ; mais il ne faut pas que l'on prenne des cantons plus de huit cent quarante par régiment d'infanterie et quatre cents par régiment de cavalerie.

De la Politique

Un des premiers principes de la politique est de tâcher de s'allier à celui de ses voisins qui peut porter à l'État les coups les plus dangereux. C'est par cette raison que nous sommes en alliance avec la Russie, parce qu'elle nous rend le dos libre de côté de la Prusse, et que, tant que cette liaison dure, nous n'avons pas à craindre que la Suède ose nous attaquer en Poméranie. Les temps peuvent changer, et la bizarrerie des conjonctures peut obliger à prendre d'autres engagements ; mais jamais on ne trouvera avec les autres puissances l'équivalent des avantages que l'on trouve avec la Russie. Les troupes françaises ne valent rien, et les Français sont accoutumés à ne secourir que faiblement leurs alliés ; et les Anglais, faits pour payer des subsides, sacrifient leurs alliés, à la paix, pour favoriser leurs propres intérêts. Je ne parle point de la maison d'Autriche, avec laquelle il paraît presque impossible que des liens solides se forment. S'il s'agit des vues politiques d'acquisition qui conviennent à cette monarchie, les États de la Saxe sont sans contredit ceux qui lui conviendraient le mieux, en l'arrondissant et lui formant une barrière par les montagnes qui séparent la Saxe de la Bohême, et qu'il faudrait fortifier. Il est difficile de prévoir comment cette acquisition pourrait se faire. La manière la plus sûre serait de conquérir la Bohême et la Moravie, et de les troquer avec la Saxe ; soit enfin que cela pût s'opérer par d'autres trocs ou des possessions du Rhin, en y ajoutant Juliers ou Berg, ou de quelque façon que cela se fasse. Cette acquisition est d'une nécessité indispensable pour donner à cet État la consistance dont il manque. Car, dès qu'on est en guerre, l'ennemi peut avancer de plain pied jusqu'à Berlin sans trouver la moindre opposition dans son chemin. Je ne parle pas, d'ailleurs, de nos droits de succession au pays d'Ansbach, Juliers et Berg, et le Mecklenbourg, parce que ce sont des prétentions

connues, et dont il faut attendre l'événement. Comme l'État n'est pas riche, il faut se garder sur toute chose de se mêler dans des guerres où il n'y a rien à gagner, parce qu'on s'épuise à pure perte, et qu'une bonne occasion arrivant ensuite, on n'en saurait pas profiter. Toutes les acquisitions éloignées sont à charge à un État. Un village sur la frontière vaut mieux qu'une principauté à soixante lieues. C'est une attention nécessaire de cacher autant qu'il est possible ses desseins d'ambition, et, si l'on peut, de réveiller l'envie de l'Europe contre d'autres puissances, à la faveur de quoi l'on frappe son coup. Cela peut arriver, et la maison d'Autriche, dont l'ambition va le visage démasqué, s'attirera de reste l'envie et la jalousie des grandes puissances. Le secret est une vertu essentielle pour la politique aussi bien que pour l'art de la guerre.

De la Justice

Les lois sont assez sagement faites dans ce pays. Je ne crois pas qu'on ait besoin d'y retoucher ; mais il faut que tous les trois ans il se fasse une visite des tribunaux des provinces, pour qu'il y ait des surveillants qui s'informent de la conduite des juges et des avocats, que l'on punit quand on les trouve en défaut. Mais comme les parties et les avocats tâchent d'éluder les meilleures lois, il est nécessaire que tous les vingt ans on examine par quel raffinement ils allongent les procès, et qu'on leur mette des barrières, comme on a fait à présent, pour ne pas prolonger les procès, ce qui ruine les parties.

Combination du Total du Gouvernement

Comme le pays est pauvre, et qu'il n'a guère de ressources, c'est une chose nécessaire que le Souverain ait toujours un trésor bien muni, pour soutenir au moins quelques campagnes. Les seules ressources qu'il peut

trouver dans le besoin consistent dans un emprunt de cinq millions de la Landschaft, et à peu près quatre millions qu'il pourra tirer du crédit de la banque ; mais voilà tout. Il a à la vérité en temps de paix cinq millions sept cent mille dont il peut disposer ; mais la plupart de cet argent doit, ou entrer dans le trésor, ou être employé à des usages publics, comme forteresses, améliorations, manufactures, canaux, défrichements, forteresses, bâtisses de villes dont on fait en pierre les maisons qui sont en bois, le tout pour rendre la constitution de l'État plus solide. Ces raisons que je viens d'alléguer exigent que le souverain de ce pays soit économe et homme qui tienne le plus grand ordre dans ses affaires. Une raison aussi valable que la première s'y joint encore ; c'est que s'il donne l'exemple de la profusion, ses sujets, qui sont pauvres, veulent l'imiter et se ruinent. Il faut surtout, pour le soutien des mœurs, que les distinctions soient uniquement pour le mérite et non pas pour les richesses ; ce principe mal observé en France a perdu les mœurs de la nation, qui autrefois ne connaissait que le chemin de l'honneur pour parvenir à la gloire, et qui croit à present qu'il suffit d'être riche pour être honoré. Comme les guerres sont un gouffre où les hommes s'abîment, il faut avoir l'œil à ce que le pays se peuple autant que possible, d'où il résulte encore un autre bien, c'est que les campagnes en sont mieux cultivées et les possesseurs mieux à leur aise. Je ne crois point que dans ce pays on doive jamais se laisser persuader de former une marine militaire. En voici les raisons. Il y a en Europe de grandes marines, savoir : celle d'Angleterre, celle de France, d'Espagne, de Danemark et de la Russie. Jamais nous ne pourrons les égaler ; ainsi, avec quelques vaisseaux, demeurant toujours inférieurs à d'autres nations, la dépense serait inutile. Ajoutez que, pour tenir une flotte, l'argent qu'elle coûterait nous obligerait de réformer des troupes de terre ; que le pays n'est pas assez peuplé pour fournir des recrues à l'armée et des matelots pour les vaisseaux, et enfin que

les batailles de mer sont rarement décisives ; d'où je conclus qu'il vaut mieux avoir la première armée de l'Europe que la plus mauvaise flotte des puissances maritimes.

La politique doit porter ses vues aussi loin qu'elle peut dans l'avenir, et juger des conjonctures de l'Europe, soit pour former des alliances, soit pour contrecarrer les projets de ses ennemis. Il ne faut pas croire qu'elle peut amener les événements ; mais quand ils se présentent, elle doit les saisir pour en profiter. Voilà pourquoi les finances doivent être en ordre. C'est par cette raison que de l'argent doit être en réserve pour que le gouvernement soit prêt d'agir sitôt que les raisons politiques lui en indiquent le moment. La guerre même doit être conduite sur les principes de la politique, pour porter les coups les plus sanglants à ses ennemis. C'était sur ces principes qu'agissait le prince Eugène qui a rendu son nom immortel par la marche et la bataille de Turin, par celles de Höchstädt et de Belgrad. Les grands projects de campagne ne réussissent pas tous ; mais quand ils sont vastes, il en résulte toujours plus d'avantages que par ces petits projets où l'on se borne à la prise d'une bicoque sur les frontières. Voilà comme le comte de Saxe ne donna la bataille de Rocoux que pour pouvoir exécuter l'hiver d'après son dessein sur Bruxelles, qui lui réussit.

Il est évident, par tout ce que je viens de dire, que la politique, le militaire et les finances sont des branches si étroitement liées ensemble, qu'elles ne sauraient être separées. Il faut les mener de front, et de leur combinaison, assujettie aux règles de la bonne politique, résultent les plus grand avantages pour les États. En France, il y a un roi qui dirige chaque branche à part. C'est le ministre qui préside, soit aux finances, soit à la guerre, soit aux affaires étrangères. Mais le point de ralliement manque et ces branches, n'étant pas réunies, divergent, et les ministres ne sont chacun occupés que des détails de leur département, sans que personne réunisse à un but fixe l'objet de leurs travaux.

Si pareille chose arrivait dans cet État, il serrait perdu, parce que les grandes monarchies vont malgré les abus, et se soutiennent par leur poids et leur force intrinsèque, et que les petits États sont vite écrasés, si tout en eux n'est force, nerf et vigueur.

Voila quelques réfléxions et mes idées sur le gouvernement de ce pays, qui, tant qu'il n'aura pas pris une plus grande consistance et de meilleures frontières, doit être gouverné par des princes qui soient toujours en vedette, les oreilles dressées, pour veiller sur leurs voisins, et prêts à se défendre d'un jour à l'autre contre les projets pernicieux de leurs ennemis.

(Signé) Frédéric.

CHAPTER X

HISTOIRE DE MON TEMPS

Avant-propos. 1775

La plupart des histoires que nous avons sont des compilations de mensonges mêlés de quelques vérités. De ce nombre prodigieux de faits qui nous ont été transmis, on ne peut compter pour avérés que ceux qui ont fait époque soit de l'élévation ou de la chute des empires. Il paraît indubitable que la bataille de Salamine s'est donnée et que les Perses ont été vaincus par les Grecs. Il n'y a aucun doute qu'Alexandre le Grand n'ait subjugué l'empire de Darius, que les Romains n'aient vaincu les Carthaginois, Antiochus et Persée ; cela est d'autant plus évident qu'ils ont possédé tous ces États. L'histoire acquiert plus de foi dans ce qu'elle rapporte des guerres civiles de Marius et de Sylla, de Pompée et de César, d'Auguste et d'Antoine, par l'authenticité des auteurs contemporains qui nous ont décrit ces événements. On n'a point de doute sur le bouleversement de l'empire d'Occident et sur celui d'Orient, car on voit naître et se former des royaumes du démembrement de l'empire romain ; mais lorsque la curiosité nous invite à descendre dans le détail des faits de ces temps reculés, nous nous précipitons dans un labyrinthe plein d'obscurités et de contradictions, et nous n'avons point de fil pour en trouver l'issue. L'amour du merveilleux, le préjugé des historiens, le zèle malentendu pour leur patrie,

leur haine pour les nations qui leur étaient opposées, toutes ces differentes passions qui ont guidé leur plume et les temps de beaucoup postérieurs aux événements où ils ont écrits, ont si fort altéré les faits en les déguisant, qu'avec des yeux de lynx même on ne parviendrait à les dévoiler à present.

Cependant, dans la foule d'auteurs de l'antiquité l'on distingue avec satisfaction la description que Xénophon fait de la retraite des dix mille qu'il avait commandés et ramenés lui-même en Grèce. Thucydide jouit à peu près de mêmes avantages. Nous sommes charmés des trouver dans les fragments qui nous restent de Polybe, l'ami et le compagnon de Scipion l'Africain, les faits qu'il nous raconte, dont lui-même a été le temoin. Les lettres de Cicéron à son ami Atticus portent le même caractère ; c'est un des acteurs de ces grandes scènes qui parle. Je n'oublierai point les Commentaires de César, écrits avec la noble simplicité d'un grand homme ; et, quoi qu'en ait dit Hirtius, les relations des autres historiens sont en tout conformes aux événements décrits dans ces Commentaires ; mais depuis César l'histoire ne contient que des panégyriques ou des satires. La barbarie des temps suivants a fait un chaos de l'histoire du Bas-Empire, et l'on ne trouve d'intéressant que les Mémoires écrits par la fille de l'empereur Alexius Comnène, parce que cette princesse rapporte ce qu'elle a vu. Depuis, les moines, qui seuls avaient quelque connaissance, ont laissé des annales trouvées dans leurs couvents, qui ont servi à l'histoire d'Allemagne ; mais quels matériaux pour l'histoire !

Les Français ont eu un évêque de Tours, un Joinville et le Journal de l'Étoile, faibles ouvrages de compilateurs qui écrivaient ce qu'ils apprenaient auh asard, mais qui difficilement pouvaient être bien instruits. Depuis la renaissance des lettres, la passion d'écrire s'est changée en fureur. Nous n'avons que trop de mémoires, d'anecdotes et de relations, parmi lesquelles il faut s'en tenir au petit nombre d'auteurs

qui ont eu des charges, qui ont été eux-mêmes acteurs, qui ont été attachés à la cour ou qui ont eu la permission des souverains de fouiller dans les archives, tels que le sage président de Thou, Phillippe de Comines, Vargas, fiscal de concile de Trente, mademoiselle d'Orléans, le Cardinal du Retz, etc. Ajoutons-y les Lettres de M. d'Estrades, les Mémoires de M. de Torcy, monuments curieux, surtout ce dernier, qui nous développe la vérité de ce testament de Charles II, roi d'Espagne, sur lequel les sentiments ont été si partagés.

Ces réflexions sur l'incertitude de l'histoire, dont je me suis souvent occupé, m'ont fait naître l'idée de transmettre à la postérité les faits principaux auxquels j'ai eu part ou dont j'ai été témoin, afin que ceux qui à l'avenir gouverneront cet État puissent connaître la vraie situation des choses lorsque je parvins à la régence, les causes qui m'ont fait agir, mes moyens, les trames de nos ennemis, les négociations, les guerres, et surtout les belles actions de nos officiers, par lesquelles ils se sont acquis l'immortalité à juste titre.

Depuis les révolutions qui bouleversèrent premièrement l'empire d'Occident, ensuite celui d'Orient ; depuis les succès immenses de Charlemagne ; depuis l'époque brilliante du règne de Charles-Quint ; après les troubles que la réforme causa en Allemagne et qui durèrent trente années ; enfin après la guerre qui s'alluma à cause de la succession d'Espagne, il n'est aucun événement plus remarquable et plus intéressant que celui que produisit la mort de l'empereur Charles VI, dernier mâle de la maison de Habsbourg.

La cour de Vienne se vit attaquée par un prince auquel elle ne pouvait supposer assez de force pour tenter une entreprise aussi difficile. Bientôt il se forma une conjuration de rois et de souverains, tous résolus à partager cette immense succession. La couronne impériale passa dans la maison de Bavière, et lorsqu'il semblait que les événements concouraient à la ruine de la jeune reine de Hongrie, cette princesse, par sa fermeté et par son habileté,

se tira d'un pas aussi dangereux, et soutint sa monarchie en sacrifiant la Silésie et une petite partie du Milanais ; c'était tout ce qu'on pouvait attendre d'une jeune princesse qui, à peine parvenue au trône, saisit l'esprit du gouvernement et devint l'âme de son conseil.

Cet ouvrage-ci étant destiné pour la postérité me délivre de la gêne de respecter les vivants et d'observer de certains ménagements incompatibles avec la franchise de la verité : il me sera permis de dire sans retenue et tout haut ce que l'on pense tout bas. Je peindrai les princes tels qu'ils sont, sans prévention pour ceux qui ont été mes alliés et sans haine pour ceux qui ont été mes ennemis ; je ne parlerai de moi-même que lorsque la nécessité m'y obligera, et l'on me permettra, à l'exemple de César, de faire mention de ce qui me regarde en personne tierce, pour éviter l'odieux de l'égoïsme. C'est à la postérité à nous juger ; mais si nous sommes sages, nous devons la prévenir en nous jugeant rigoureusement nous-mêmes. Le vrai mérite d'un bon prince est d'avoir un attachement sincère au bien public, d'aimer sa patrie et la gloire ; je dis la gloire, car l'heureux instinct qui anime les hommes du désir d'une bonne réputation est le vrai principe des actions héroïques ; c'est le nerf de l'âme qui la réveille de sa léthargie pour la porter aux entreprises utiles, nécessaire et louables.

Tout ce qu'on avance dans ces mémoires, soit à l'égard des négociations, des lettres de souverains ou de traités signés, a ses preuves conservées dans les archives. On peu répondre des faits militaires comme témoin oculaire ; telle relation de bataille a été differée de deux ou trois jours pour la rendre plus exacte et plus véridique.

La postérité verra peut-être avec surprise dans ces mémoires les récits de traités faits et rompus. Quoique ces exemples soient communs, cela ne justifierait point l'auteur de cet ouvrage, s'il n'avait d'autres raisons meilleures pour excuser sa conduite.

L'intérêt de l'État doit servir de règle aux souverains.

Les cas de rompre les alliances sont ceux : (1) où l'allié manque à remplir ses engagements ; (2) où l'allié médite de vous tromper et où il ne vous reste de ressource que de le prévenir ; (3) une force majeure qui vous opprime et vous force à rompre vos traités ; (4) enfin l'insuffisance des moyens pour continuer la guerre.

Par je ne sais quelle fatalité, ces malheureuses richesses influent sur tout. Les princes sont les esclaves de leurs moyens ; l'intérêt de l'État leur sert de loi, et cette loi est inviolable. Si le prince est dans l'obligation de sacrifier sa personne même au salut de ses sujets, à plus forte raison doit-il leur sacrifier des liaisons dont la continuation leur deviendrait préjudiciable. Les exemples de pareils traités rompus se recontrent communément. Notre intention n'est pas de les justifier tous. J'ose pourtant avancer qu'il en est de tels, que la nécessité ou la sagesse, la prudence ou le bien des peuples obligeaient de transgresser, ne restant aux souverains que ce moyen-là d'éviter leur ruine.

Si François I avait accompli le traité de Madrid, il aurait, en perdant la Bourgogne, établi un ennemi dans le cœur de ses États. C'était réduire la France dans l'état malheureux où elle était du temps de Louis XI et de Louis XII. Si, après la bataille de Muhlberg, gagnée par Charles Quint, la ligue protestante d'Allemagne ne s'était pas fortifiée de l'appui de la France, elle n'aurait pu éviter de porter les chaînes que l'Empereur lui préparait de longue main. Si les Anglais n'avaient pas rompu l'alliance, si contraire à leurs intérêts, par laquelle Charles II s'était uni avec Louis XIV, leur puissance courait risque d'être diminuée, d'autant plus que, dans la balance politique de l'Europe, la France l'aurait emporté de beaucoup sur l'Angleterre.

Les sages, qui prévoient les effets dans les causes, doivent à temps s'opposer à ces causes si diamétralement opposées à leurs intérêts. Qu'on me permette de m'expliquer exactement sur cette matière délicate, que l'on n'a guère

traitée dogmatiquement. Il me paraît clair et évident qu'un particulier doit être attaché scrupuleusement à sa parole, l'eût-il même donné inconsidérément. Si on lui manque, il peut recourir à la protection des lois, et quoi qu'il en arrive, ce n'est qu'un individu qui souffre ; mais à quels tribunaux un souverain prendra-t-il recours, si un autre prince viole envers lui ses engagements ? La parole d'un particulier n'entraîne que le malheur d'un seul homme, celle des souverains des calamités générales pour des nations entières. Ceci se réduit à cette question : vaut-il mieux que le peuple périsse ou que le prince rompe son traité ? Quel serait l'imbécile qui balancerait pour décider cette question ?

Vous voyez par les cas que nous venons d'exposer qu'avant de porter un jugement décisif sur les actions d'un prince, il faut commencer par examiner mûrement les circonstances où il s'est trouvé, la conduite de ses alliés, les ressources qu'il pouvait avoir ou qui lui manquaient pour remplir ses engagements. Car, comme nous l'avons déjà dit, le bon ou le mauvais état des finances sont comme le pouls des États, qui influent plus qu'on ne le croit ni qu'on ne le sait dans les opérations politiques et militaires. Le public, qui ignore ces détails, ne juge que sur les apparences, et se trompe par conséquent dans ses décisions ; la prudence empêche qu'on ne le désabuse, parce que ce serait le comble de la démence d'ébruiter soi-même par vaine gloire la partie faible de l'État : les ennemis, charmés d'une pareille découverte, ne manqueraient pas d'en profiter. La sagesse exige donc qu'on abandonne au public la liberté de ses jugements téméraires, et que ne pouvant se justifier pendant sa vie, sans compromettre l'intérêt de l'État, l'on se contente de se légitimer aux yeux désintéressés de la postérité.

Peut-être ne sera-t-on pas fâché que j'ajoute quelques réflexions générales à ce que je viens de dire sur les événements qui sont arrivés de mon temps. J'ai vu que les

petits États peuvent se soutenir contre les plus grandes monarchies lorsque ces États ont de l'industrie et beaucoup d'ordre dans leurs affaires. Je trouve que les grands empires ne vont que par des abus, qu'ils sont remplis de confusion, et qu'ils ne se soutiennent que par leurs vastes ressources et par la force intrinsèque de leur masse. Les intrigues qui se font dans ces cours perdraient des princes moins puissants : elles nuisent toujours, mais elles n'empêchent pas que de nombreuses armées ne conservent leur poids.

J'observe que toutes les guerres portées loin des frontières de ceux qui les entreprennent n'ont pas les mêmes succès que celles qui se font à portée de la patrie. Ne serait-ce pas par un sentiment naturel dans l'homme qui sent qu'il est plus juste de se défendre que de dépouiller son voisin ? Mais peut-être la raison physique l'emporte-t-elle sur la morale par la difficulté de pourvoir aux vivres dans un trop grand éloignement de la frontière, à fournir à temps les recrues, les remontes, les habillements, les munitions de guerre, etc. Ajoutons encore que, plus les troupes sont aventurées dans des pays lointains, plus elles craignent qu'on ne leur coupe la retraite ou qu'on ne la rende difficile. Je m'aperçois de la supériorité marquée de la flotte anglaise sur celle des Français et des Espagnols réunie, et je m'étonne comment la marine de Philippe II, ayant eu autrefois cet ascendant sur celle des Anglais et des Hollandais, n'a pas conservé d'aussi grands avantages.

Je remarque encore avec surprise que tous ces armements de mer sont plus pour l'ostentation que pour l'effet, et qu'au lieu de protéger le commerce, ils ne l'empêchent pas de se détruire. D'un côté se présente le roi d'Espagne, souverain du Potose, obéré en Europe, créancier à Madrid de ses officiers et de ses domestiques ; de l'autre, le roi d'Angleterre, qui répand à pleines mains ses guinées, que trente ans d'industrie avaient accumulées dans la Grande-Bretagne, pour soutenir la reine de Hongrie et la Pragmatique Sanction, indépendamment de quoi cette reine de Hongrie

est obligée de sacrifier quelques provinces pour sauver le reste.

La capitale du monde chrétien s'ouvre au premier venu, et le pape, n'osant pas accabler d'anathèmes ceux qui le font contribuer, est obligé de les bénir. L'Italie est inondée d'étrangers qui se battent pour la subjuguer. L'exemple des Anglais entraîne comme un torrent les Hollandais dans cette guerre qui leur est étrangère, et ces républicains qui du temps que des héros, les Eugène, les Marlborough, commandaient leurs armées, y envoyaient des députés pour régler les opérations militaires, n'en envoient point lorsqu'un duc de Cumberland se trouve à la tête de leurs troupes. Le Nord s'embrase et produit une guerre funeste à la Suède. Le Danemarck s'anime, s'agite et se calme. La Saxe change deux fois de parti ; elle ne gagne rien ni avec les uns ni avec les autres, sinon qu'elle attire les Prussiens dans ses États et qu'elle se ruine. Un conflit d'événements change les causes de la guerre : cependant les effets continuent, quoique le motif ait cessé. La fortune passe rapidement d'un parti dans l'autre ; mais l'ambition et le désir de la vengeance nourissent et entretiennent le feu de la guerre. Il semble voir une partie de joueurs qui veulent avoir leur revanche et ne quittent le jeu qu'après s'être entièrement ruinés.

Si l'on demandait à un ministre anglais : Quelle rage vous oblige à prolonger la guerre ? C'est que la France ne pourra plus fournir aux frais de la campagne prochaine, répondrait-il. Si l'on faisait la même question à un ministre français, la réponse serait à peu près semblable. Ce qu'il y a de déplorable dans cette politique, c'est qu'elle se joue de la vie des hommes, et que le sang humain, répandu avec profusion, l'est inutilement. Encore si, par la guerre, on pouvait parvenir à fixer solidement les frontières et à maintenir cette balance des pouvoirs si nécessaire entre les souverains de l'Europe, on pourrait regarder ceux qui ont péri comme des victimes sacrifiées à la tranquillité

et à la sûreté publique. Mais qu'on s'envie des provinces en Amérique, ne voilà-t-il pas toute l'Europe entraînée dans des partis differents pour se battre sur mer et sur terre.

Les ambitieux devraient considérer surtout que les armes et la discipline militaire étant à peu près les mêmes en Europe, et les alliances mettant pour l'ordinaire l'égalité des forces entre les parties belligérantes, tout ce que les princes peuvent attendre de leurs plus grands avantages dans les temps où nous vivons, c'est d'acquérir par des succès accumulés ou quelque petite ville sur les frontières, ou une banlieue qui ne rapporte pas les intérêts des dépenses de la guerre, et dont la population n'approche pas de nombre des citoyens péris dans les campagnes.

Quiconque a des entrailles et envisage ces objets de sangfroid doit être ému des maux que les hommes d'État causent aux peuples, faute d'y réfléchir ou bien entraînés par leur passions. La raison nous prescrit une règle sur ce sujet, dont, ce me semble, aucun homme d'État ne doit s'écarter ; c'est de saisir l'occasion et d'entreprendre lorsqu'elle est favourable ; mais de ne point la forcer en abandonnant tout au hasard. Il y a des moments qui demandent qu'on mette toute son activité en jeu pour en profiter, mais il y en a d'autres où la prudence veut qu'on reste dans l'inaction. Cette matière exige la plus profonde réflexion, parce que non-seulement il faut bien examiner l'état des choses, mais qu'il faut encore prévoir toutes les suites d'une entreprise, et peser les moyens que l'on a avec ceux de ses ennemis pour juger lesquels l'emportent dans la balance. Si la raison n'y décide pas seule, et que la passion s'en mêle, il est impossible que d'heureux succès suivent une pareille entreprise. La politique demande de la patience, et le chef-d'œuvre d'un homme habile est de faire chaque chose en son temps et à propos.

L'histoire ne nous fournit que trop d'exemples de guerres légèrement enterprises ; il n'y qu'à se rappeler la vie de François I et lire ce que Brantôme dit être le sujet de

sa malheureuse expédition du Milanais, où ce roi fut fait prisonnier à Pavie ; il n'y a qu'à voir combien peu Charles-Quint profita de l'occasion qui se présentait à lui, après la bataille de Muhlberg, pour subjuguer l'Allemagne ; il n'y a qu'à voir l'histoire de Frédéric V, électeur palatin, pour se convaincre de la précipitation avec laquelle il s'engagea dans une entreprise bien au-dessus de ses forces. Et dans nos derniers temps, qu'on se rappelle la conduite de Maximilien de Bavière, qui dans la guerre de Succession, lorsque son pays était, pour ainsi dire, bloqué par les alliés, se rangea du parti des Français, pour se voir dépouiller de ses États. Et plus recemment Charles XII, roi de Suède, nous fournit un exemple plus frappant encore des suites funestes que l'entêtement et la fausse conduite des souverains attire sur les sujects.

L'histoire est l'école des princes ; c'est à eux de s'instruire des fautes des siècles passés, pour les éviter, et pour apprendre qu'il faut se former un système et le suivre pied à pied, et que celui qui a le mieux calculé sa conduite est le seul que puisse l'emporter sur ceux qui agissent moins conséquemment que lui.

CHAPTER XI

ESSAI SUR LES FORMES DE GOUVERNEMENT ET SUR LES DEVOIRS DES SOUVERAINS (1777)

Nous trouvons, en remontant à l'antiquité la plus reculée, que les peuples dont la connaissance nous est parvenue menaient une vie pastorale, et ne formaient point de corps de société : ce que la Genèse rapporte de l'histoire des patriarches en est un témoignage suffisant. Avant le petit peuple juif, les Égyptiens devaient être de même éparpillés par familles dans ces contrées que le Nil ne submergeait pas ; et sans doute il s'est écoulé bien des siècles avant que ce fleuve, dompté, permît aux régnicoles de se rassembler par bourgades. Nous apprenons par l'histoire grecque le nom des fondateurs des villes et celui des législateurs qui les premiers les rassamblèrent en corps ; cette nation fut longtemps sauvage, comme le furent tous les habitants de notre globe. Si les annales des Étrusques, des Samnites, des Sabins, &c., nous étaient parvenues, nous apprendrions assurément que ces peuples vivaient isolés par familles avant de s'être rassemblés et réunis. Les Gaulois formaient déjà des associations du temps que Jules César les dompta. Mais il paraît que la Grande-Bretagne n'était pas perfectionnée à ce point lorsque ce conquérant y passa pour la première fois avec les troupes romaines. Du temps de ce grand homme, les Germains ne pouvaient se comparer qu'aux Iroquois, aux Algonquins et pareilles nations sauvages ; ils ne vivaient que de la chasse, de la

pêche, et du lait de leurs troupeaux. Un Germain croyait s'avilir en cultivant la terre ; il employait à ces travaux les esclaves qu'il avait faits à la guerre ; aussi la forêt d'Hercynie couvrait-elle presque entièrement cette vaste étendue de pays qui compose maintenant l'Allemagne. La nation ne pouvait pas être nombreuse, faute de nourriture suffisante ; et c'est là sans doute la véritable cause de ces émigrations prodigieuses des peuples du Septentrion, qui se précipitaient vers le Midi pour chercher des terres toutes défrichées et un climat moins rigoureux.

On est étonné quand on se représente le genre humain vivant si longtemps dans un état d'abrutissement et sans former de société, et l'on recherche avidement quelle raison a pu le porter à se réunir en corps de peuple. Sans doute que les violences et les pillages d'autres hordes voisines ont fait naître à ces peuplades isolées l'idée de se joindre à d'autres familles pour assurer leurs possessions par leur mutuelle défense. De là sont nées les lois qui enseignent aux sociétés à préférer l'intérêt général au bien particulier. Dès lors personne, sans craindre de châtiment, n'osa s'emparer du bien d'autrui, personne n'osa attenter sur la vie de son voisin, il fallut respecter sa femme et ses biens comme des objets sacrés, et si la société entière se trouvait attaquée, chacun devait accourir pour la sauver. Cette grande vérité, qu'il faut agir envers les autres comme nous voudrions qu'ils se comportassent envers nous, devient le principe des lois et du pacte social ; de là naît l'amour de la patrie, envisagée comme l'asile de notre bonheur. Mais comme ces lois ne pouvaient ni se maintenir ni s'exécuter sans un surveillant qui s'en occupât sans cesse, ce fut l'origine des magistrats, que le peuple élut et auxquels il se soumit. Qu'on s'imprime bien que la conservation des lois fut l'unique raison qui engagea les hommes à se donner des supérieurs, puisque c'est la vraie origine de la souveraineté. Ce magistrat était le premier serviteur de l'État. Quand ces sociétés naissantes avaient à craindre

de leurs voisins, le magistrat armait le peuple et volait à la défense des citoyens.

Cet instinct général des hommes qui les anime à se procurer le plus grand bonheur possible donna lieu à la formation des différents genres de gouvernement. Les uns crurent qu'en s'abandonnant à la conduite de quelques sages ils trouveraient ce bonheur ; de là le gouvernement aristocratique. D'autres préférèrent l'oligarchie. Athènes et la plupart des républiques grecques choisirent la démocratie. La Perse et l'Orient ployaient sous le despotisme. Les Romains eurent quelque temps des rois ; mais lassés des violences des Tarquins, il tournèrent la forme de leur gouvernement en aristocratie. Bientôt, fatigué de la dureté des patriciens, qui l'opprimaient par des usures, le peuple s'en sépara, et ne retourna à Rome qu'après que le sénat eut autorisé les tribuns que ce peuple avait élus pour le soutenir contre le violence des grands ; depuis, il devint presque le dépositaire de l'autorité suprême. On appelait tyrans ceux qui s'emparaient avec violence du gouvernement, et qui, ne suivant que leurs passions et leurs caprices pour guides, renversaient les lois et les principes fondamentaux que la société avait établis pour sa conservation.

Mais quelque sages que fussent les législateurs et les premiers qui rassemblèrent le peuple en corps, quelque bonnes que fussent leurs institutions, il ne s'est trouvé aucun de ces gouvernements qui se soit soutenu dans toute son intégrité. Pourquoi ? Parce que les hommes sont imparfaits, et que leurs ouvrages le sont par conséquent ; parce que les citoyens, poussés par des passions, se laissent aveugler par l'intérêt particulier, qui toujours bouleverse l'intérêt général ; enfin parce que rien n'est stable dans ce monde. Dans les aristocraties, l'abus que les premiers membres de l'État font de leur autorité est, pour l'ordinaire, cause des révolutions qui s'ensuivent. La démocratie des Romains fut bouleversée par le peuple même ; la masse

aveuglée de ces plébéiens se laissa corrompre par des citoyens ambitieux qui ensuite les asservirent et les privèrent de leur liberté. C'est le sort auquel l'Angleterre doit s'attendre, si la chambre basse ne préfère pas les véritables intérêts de la nation à cette corruption infâme qui l'avilit. Quant au gouvernement monarchique, on en a vu bien des espèces différentes. L'ancien gouvernement féodal, qui était presque général en Europe il y a quelques siècles, s'était établi par les conquêtes des barbares. Le général qui menait une horde se rendait souverain du pays conquis, et il partageait les provinces entre ses principaux officiers ; ceux-là à la vérité étaient soumis au suzerain, et lui fournissaient des troupes, s'il les demandait ; mais comme quelques-uns de ces vassaux devinrent aussi puissants que leur chef, cela formait des États dans l'État. C'était une pépinière de guerres civiles dont résultait le malheur de la société générale. En Allemagne ces vassaux sont devenus indépendants ; ils ont été opprimés en France, en Angleterre et en Espagne. Le seul modèle qui nous reste de cet abominable gouvernement subsiste encore dans la république de Pologne. En Turquie, le souverain est despotique, il peut commettre impunément les cruautés les plus révoltantes ; mais aussi lui arrive-t-il souvent, par une vicissitude commune chez les nations barbares, ou par une juste rétribution, qu'il est étranglé à son tour. Pour le gouvernement vraiment monarchique, il est le pire ou le meilleur de tous, selon qu'il est administré.

Nous avons remarqué que les citoyens n'ont accordé la prééminence à un de leurs semblables qu'en faveur des services qu'ils attendaient de lui ; ces services consistent à maintenir les lois, à faire exactement observer la justice, à s'opposer de toutes ses forces à la corruption des mœurs, à défendre l'État contre ses ennemis. Le magistrat doit avoir l'œil sur la culture des terres ; il doit procurer l'abondance des vivres à la société, encourager l'industrie et le commerce ; il est comme une sentinelle permanente qui doit veiller

sur les voisins et sur la conduite des ennemis de l'État. On demande que sa prévoyance et sa prudence forment à temps les liaisons, et choisissent les alliés les plus convenables aux intérêts de son association. On voit par ce court exposé quel détail de connaissances chacun de ces articles exige en particulier. Il faut joindre à cela une étude approfondie du local du pays que le magistrat doit gouverner, et bien connaître le génie de la nation, parce qu'en péchant par ignorance, le souverain se rend aussi coupable que par les péchés qu'il aurait commis par malice : les uns sont des défauts de paresse, les autres des vices du cœur ; mais le mal qui en résulte est le même pour la société.

Les princes, les souverains, les rois ne sont donc pas revêtus de l'autorité suprême pour se plonger impunément dans la débauche et dans le luxe ; ils ne sont pas éléves sur leurs concitoyens pour leur orgueil, se pavanant dans la représentation, insulte avec mépris à la simplicité des mœurs, à la pauvreté, à la misère ; ils ne sont point à la tête de l'État pour entretenir auprès de leurs personnes un tas de fainéants dont l'oisiveté et l'inutilité engendrent tous les vices. La mauvaise administration du gouvernement monarchique provient de bien des causes différentes, qui ont leur source dans le caractère du souverain. Ainsi un prince adonné aux femmes se laissera gouverner par ses maîtresses et par ses favoris ; ceux-là, abusant du pouvoir qu'ils ont sur l'ésprit du prince, se serviront de cet ascendant pour commettre des injustices, protéger des gens perdus de mœurs, vendre des charges, et autres infamies pareilles. Si le prince, par fainéantise, abandonne le gouvernail de l'État en des mains mercenaires, je veux dire à ses ministres, alors l'un tire à droite, l'autre à gauche, personne ne travaille sur un plan général, chaque ministre renverse ce qu'il a trouvé établi, quelque bonne que soit la chose, pour devenir créateur de nouveautés et pour réaliser ses fantaisies, souvent au détriment du bien public ; d'autres ministres

qui remplacent ceux-là se hâtent de bouleverser à leur tour ces arrangements avec aussi peu de solidité que leurs prédécesseurs, satisfaits de passer pour inventeurs. Ainsi cette suite de changements et de variations ne donne pas à ces projets le temps de pousser racine. De là naissent la confusion, le désordre et tous les vices d'une mauvaise administration. Les prévaricateurs ont une excuse toute prête : ils couvrent leur turpitude de ces changements perpétuels ; et comme ces sortes de ministres se contentent de ce que personne ne recherche leur conduite, ils se gardent bien d'en donner l'exemple en sévissant contre leur subalternes. Les hommes s'attachent à ce qui leur appartient ; l'État n'appartient pas à ces ministres ; ils n'ont donc pas son bien véritablement à cœur, tout s'exécute avec nonchalance et avec une espèce d'indifférence stoique, d'où résulte le dépérissement de la justice, des finances et du militaire. De monarchique qu'il était ce gouvernement dégénère en une véritable aristocratie où les ministres et les généraux dirigent les affaires selon leur fantasie ; alors on ne connaît plus de système général, chacun suit ses idées particulières, et le point central, le point d'unité, est perdu. Comme tous les ressorts d'une montre conspirent au même but, qui est celui de mesurer le temps, les ressorts du gouvernement devraient être montés de même pour que toutes les différentes parties de l'administration concourussent également au plus grand bien de l'État, objet important qu'on ne doit jamais perdre de vue. D'ailleurs, l'intérêt personnel des ministres et des généraux fait pour l'ordinaire qu'ils se contrecarrent en tout et que quelquefois ils empêchent l'exécution des meilleures choses, parce que ce ne sont pas eux qui les ont proposées. Mais le mal arrive à son comble, si des âmes perverses parviennent à persuader au souverain que ses intérêts sont différents de ceux de ses sujets ; alors le souverain devient l'ennemi de ses peuples sans savoir pourquoi ; il devient dur, sévère, inhumain par mésentendu ; car le principe dont il part étant faux,

les conséquences le doivent être nécessairement. Le souverain est attaché par des liens indissolubles au corps de l'État ; par conséquent il ressent par répercussion tous les maux qui affligent ses sujets, et la société souffre également des malheurs qui touchent son souverain. Il n'y a qu'un bien, qui est celui de l'État en général. Si le prince perd des provinces, il n'est plus en état comme par le passé d'assister ses sujets ; si le malheur l'a forcé de contracter des dettes, c'est aux pauvres citoyens à les acquitter ; en revanche, si le peuple est peu nombreux, s'il croupit dans la misère, le souverain est privé de toute ressource. Ce sont des verités si incontestables, qu'il n'est pas besoin d'appuyer davantage là-dessus.

Je le répète donc, le souverain représente l'État ; lui et ses peuples ne forment qu'un corps, qui ne peut être heureux qu'autant que la concorde les unit. Le prince est à la société qu'il gouverne ce que la tête est au corps ; il doit voir, penser et agir pour toute la communauté, afin de lui procurer tous les avantages dont elle est susceptible. Si l'on veut que le gouvernement monarchique l'emporte sur le républicain, l'arrêt du souverain est prononcé : il doit être actif et intègre, et rassembler toutes ses forces pour remplir la carrière qui lui est prescrite. Voici l'idée que je me fais de ses devoirs.

Il doit se procurer une connaissance exacte et détaillée de la force et de la faiblesse de son pays, tant pour les ressources pécuniaires que pour la population, les finances, le commerce, les lois et le génie de la nation qu'il doit gouverner. Les lois, si elles sont bonnes, doivent être exprimées clairement, afin que la chicane ne puisse pas les tourner à son gré pour en éluder l'esprit et décider de la fortune des particuliers arbitrairement et sans règle ; la procédure doit être aussi courte qu'il est possible, afin d'empêcher la ruine des plaideurs, qui consumeraient en faux frais ce qui leur est dû de justice et de bon droit. Cette partie du gouvernement ne saurait être assez surveillée,

pour mettre toutes les barrières possibles à l'avidité des juges et à l'intérêt démesuré des avocats. On retient tout le monde dans son devoir par des visitations qui se font de temps à autre dans les provinces, où quiconque se croit lésé ose porter ses plaintes à la commission, et les prévaricateurs doivent être sévèrement punis. Il est peut-être superflu d'ajouter que les peines ne doivent jamais passer le délit, que la violence ne doit jamais être employée au lieu des lois, et qu'il vaut mieux qu'un souverain soit trop indulgent que trop sévère. Comme tout particulier qui n'agit pas par principes a une conduite inconséquente, d'autant plus importe-t-il qu'un magistrat qui veille au bien des peuples agisse d'après un système arrêté de politique, de guerre, de finance, de commerce et de lois. Par exemple, un peuple doux ne doit point avoir des lois sévères, mais des lois adaptées à son caractère. La base de ces systèmes doit toujours être relative au plus grand bien de la société ; les principes doivent être adaptés à la situation du pays, à ses anciens usages, s'ils sont bons, au génie de la nation. Par exemple, en politique c'est un fait connu que les alliés les plus naturels et par conséquent les meilleurs sont ceux dont les intérêts, concourent avec les nôtres, et qui ne sont pas si proches voisins, qu'on soit engagé en quelque discussion d'intérêt avec eux. Quelquefois des événements bizarres donnent lieu à des combinaisons extraordinaires. Nous avons vu, de nos jours, des nations de tout temps rivales et même ennemies marcher sous les mêmes bannières ; mais ce sont des cas qui arrivent rarement, et qui ne serviront jamais d'exemples. Ces sortes de liaisons ne peuvent être que momentanées, au lieu que le genre des autres, contractées par un intérêt commun, peut seul être durable. Dans la situation où l'Europe est de nos jours, où tous les princes sont armés, parmi lesquels il s'élève des puissances prépondérantes capables d'écraser les faibles, la prudence exige qu'on s'allie avec d'autres puissances, soit pour s'assurer des

secours en cas d'attaque, soit pour réprimer les projets dangereux de ses ennemis, soit pour soutenir, à l'aide de ces alliés, de justes preténtions contre ceux qui voudraient s'y opposer. Mais ceci ne suffit pas ; il faut avoir chez ses voisins, surtout chez ses ennemis, des yeux et des oreilles ouverts, qui rapportent fidèlement ce qu'ils ont vu et entendu. Les hommes sont méchants ; il faut se garder surtout d'être surpris, parce que tout ce qui surprend effraye et décontenance, ce qui n'arrive jamais quand on est préparé, quelque fâcheux que soit l'événement auquel on doit s'attendre. La politique européenne est si fallacieuse, que le plus avisé peut devenir dupe, s'il n'est pas toujours alerte et sur ses gardes.

Le système militaire doit être également assis sur de bons principes qui soient sûrs et reconnus par l'expérience. On doit connaître le génie de la nation, de quoi elle est capable, et jusqu'où l'on ose risquer ses enterprises en la menant à l'ennemi. Dans nos temps, il nous est interdit d'employer à la guerre les usages des Grecs et des Romains. La découverte de la poudre à canon a changé entièrement la façon de faire la guerre. Maintenant c'est la supériorité du feu qui décide de la victoire ; les exercices, les règlements et la tactique ont été refondus pour les conformer à cet usage, et récemment, l'abus énorme des nombreuses artilleries qui appesantissent les armées nous force également d'adopter cette mode, tant pour nous soutenir dans nos postes que pour attaquer l'ennemi dans ceux qu'il occupe, au cas que d'importantes raisons l'exigent. Tant de raffinements nouveaux ont donc si fort changé l'art de la guerre que ce serait de nos jours une témérité impardonnable à un général, en imitant les Turenne, les Condé, les Luxembourg, de risquer une bataille en suivant les dispositions que ces grands généraux ont faites de leur temps. Alors les victoires se remportaient par la valeur et par la force ; maintenant l'artillerie décide de tout ; et l'habileté du général consiste à faire approcher ses troupes de l'ennemi

sans qu'elles soient détruites avant de commencer à l'attaquer. Pour se procurer cet avantage, il faut qu'il fasse taire le feu de l'ennemi par la supériorité de celui qu'il lui oppose. Mais ce qui restera éternellement stable dans l'art militaire, c'est la castramétrie, ou l'art de tirer le plus grand parti possible d'un terrain pour son avantage. Si de nouvelles découvertes se font encore, ce sera une nécessité que les généraux de ces temps-là se prêtent à ces nouveautés, et changent à notre tactique ce qui exige correction.

Il est des États qui, par leur local et par leur constitution, doivent être des puissances maritimes ; tels sont l'Angleterre, la Hollande, la France, l'Espagne, le Danemark : ils sont environnés de la mer, et les colonies eloignées qu'ils possèdent leur prescrivent d'avoir des vaisseaux pour entretenir la communication et le commerce entre la mère patrie et ces membres détachés. Il est d'autres États, comme l'Autriche, la Pologne, la Prusse et même la Russie, dont les uns pourraient se passer de marine, et les autres commettraient une faute impardonnable en politique, s'ils divisaient leurs forces en voulant employer sur mer des troupes dont ils ont un besoin indispensable sur terre. Le nombre des troupes qu'un État entretient doit être en proportion des troupes qu'ont ses ennemis ; il faut qu'il se trouve en même force, ou le plus faible risque de succomber. On objectera peut-être que le prince doit compter sur les secours de ses alliés. Cela serait bon, si les alliés étaient tels qu'ils devaient être ; mais leur zèle n'est que tiédeur, et l'on se trompe à coup sûr, si l'on compte sur d'autres que sur soi-même. Si la situation des frontières est susceptible d'être défendue par des forteresses, il ne faut rien négliger pour en construire, et ne rien épargner pour les perfectionner. La France en a donné l'exemple, et elle en a senti l'avantage en différéntes occasions.

Mais ni la politique ni le militaire ne peuvent prospérer, si les finances ne sont pas entretenues dans le plus grand ordre, et si le prince lui-même n'est économe et prudent.

L'argent est comme la baguette des enchanteurs, par le moyen de laquelle ils opéraient des miracles. Les grandes vues politiques, l'entretien du militaire, les meilleures intentions pour le soulagement des peuples, tout cela demeure engourdi, si l'argent ne le vivifie. L'économie du souverain est d'autant plus utile pour le bien public, que s'il ne se trouve pas avoir des fonds suffisants en réserve soit pour fournir aux frais de la guerre sans charger ses peuples d'impôts extraordinaires, soit pour secourir les citoyens dans des calamités publiques, toutes ces charges tombent sur les sujets, qui se trouvent sans ressource dans des temps malheureux où ils ont si grand besoin d'assistance. Aucun gouvernement ne peut se passer d'impôts ; soit républicain soit monarchique il en a un égal besoin. Il faut bien que le magistrat chargé de toute la besogne publique ait de quoi vivre que les juges soient payés, pour les empêcher de prévariquer, que le soldat soit entretenu, afin qu'il ne commette point de violences faute d'avoir de quoi subsister ; il faut de même que les personnes préposées au maniement des finances soient assez bien payées pour que le besoin ne les oblige pas d'administrer infidèlement les deniers publics. Ces différentes dépenses demandent des sommes considérables ; ajoutez-y encore quelque argent mis annuellement de côté pour les cas extraordinaires : voilà cependant ce qui doit être nécessairement pris sur le peuple. Le grand art consiste à lever ces fonds sans fouler les citoyens. Pour que les taxes soient égales et non arbitraires, l'on fait des cadastres, qui, s'ils sont classifiés avec exactitude, proportionnent les charges selon les moyens des individus ; cela est si nécessaire, qu'une faute impardonnable en finance serait si les impôts, maladroitement répartis, dégoûtaient l'agriculteur de ses travaux ; il doit, ayant acquitté ses droits, pouvoir encore vivre avec une certaine aisance, lui et sa famille. Bien loin d'opprimer les pères nourriciers de l'État, il faut les encourager à bien cultiver leurs terres ; c'est en quoi consiste la véritable

richesse du pays. La terre fournit les comestibles les plus nécessaires, et ceux qui la travaillent sont, comme nous l'avons déjà dit, les vrais pères nourriciers de la société.

On m'opposera peut-être que la Hollande subsiste sans que ses champs lui rapportent la centième partie de ce qu'elle consume. Je réponds à cette objection que c'est un petit État, chez lequel le commerce supplée à l'agriculture ; mais plus un gouvernement est vaste, plus l'économie rurale a besoin d'être encouragée.

Une autre espèce d'impôts qu'on lève sur les villes, ce sont les accises. Elles veulent être maniées avec des mains adroites, pour ne point charger les comestibles les plus nécessaires à la vie, comme le pain, la petite bière, la viande, &c., ce qui retomberait sur les soldats, sur les ouvriers et sur les artisans ; d'où il s'ensuivrait, pour le malheur du peuple, que la main-d'œuvre rehausserait de prix ; par conséquent les marchandises deviendraient si chères, qu'on en perdrait le débit étranger. C'est ce qui arrive maintenant en Hollande et en Angleterre. Ces deux nations, ayant contracté des dettes immenses dans les dernières guerres, ont créé de nouveaux impôts pour en payer le dividende, mais comme leur maladresse en a chargé la main-d'œuvre, ils ont presque écrasé leurs manufactures. De là, la cherté en Hollande étant augmentée, ces républicains font fabriquer leurs draps à Verviers et à Liège, et l'Angleterre a perdu un débit considérable de ces laines en Allemagne. Pour obvier à ces abus, le souverain doit souvent se souvenir de l'état du pauvre peuple, se mettre à la place d'un paysan et d'un manufacturier, et se dire alors : Si j'étais né dans la classe de ces citoyens dont les bras sont le capital, que désirerais-je du souverain ? Ce que le bon sens alors lui indiquera, son devoir est de le mettre en pratique. Il se trouve des provinces, dans la plupart des États de l'Europe, où les paysans, attachés à la glèbe, sont serfs de leurs gentilshommes ; c'est de toutes les conditions la plus malheureuse et celle qui révolte

le plus l'humanité. Assurément aucun homme n'est né pour être l'esclave de son semblable ; on déteste avec raison un pareil abus, et l'on croit qu'il ne faudrait que vouloir pour abolir cette coutume barbare ; mais il n'en est pas ainsi, elle tient à d'anciens contrats faits entre les possesseurs des terres et les colons. L'agriculture est arrangée en conséquence des services des paysans ; en voulant abolir tout d'un coup cette abominable gestion, on bouleverserait entièrement l'économie des terres, et il faudrait en partie indemniser la noblesse des pertes qu'elle souffrirait en ses revenus.

Ensuite s'offre l'article des manufactures et du commerce, non moins important. Pour qu'un pays se conserve dans une situation florissante, il est de toute nécessité que la balance du commerce lui soit avantageuse ; s'il paye plus pour les importations qu'il ne gagne par les exportations, il faut nécessairement qu'il s'appauvrisse d'année en année. Qu'on se figure un bourse où il y a cent ducats : tirez-en journellement un, et n'y remettez rien, vous conviendrez qu'au bout de cent jours la bourse sera vide. Voici les moyens d'obvier à cette perte : faire manufacturer toutes les premières matières qu'on possède, faire travailler les matières étrangères pour y gagner la main-d'œuvre et travailler à bon marché pour se procurer de débit étranger. Quant au commerce, il roule sur trois points : sur le superflu de vos denrées, que vous exportez ; sur celles de vos voisins, qui vous enrichissent en les vendant ; et sur les marchandises étrangères que vos besoins exigent et que vous importez. C'est sur ces productions que nous venons d'indiquer que doit se régler le commerce d'un État ; voilà de quoi il est susceptible par la nature des choses. L'Angleterre, la Hollande, la France, l'Espagne, le Portugal, ont des possessions aux deux Indes et des ressources plus étendues pour leur marine marchande que les autres royaumes ; profiter des avantages qu'on a, et ne rien entreprendre au delà de ses forces, c'est le conseil de la sagesse.

Il nous reste à parler des moyens les plus propres pour

maintenir invariablement l'abondance des vivres, dont la société a un besoin indispensable pour demeurer florissante. La première chose est d'avoir soin de la bonne culture des terres, de défricher tous les terrains qui sont capables de rapport, d'augmenter les troupeaux pour gagner d'autant plus de lait, de beurre, de fromage et d'engrais ; d'avoir ensuite un relevé exact de la quantité de boisseaux des différentes espèces de grains gagnés dans de bonnes, dans de médiocres et dans de mauvaises années ; d'en décompter la consommation, et, par ce résultat, de s'instruire de ce qu'il y a de superflu, dont l'exportation doit être permise, ou de ce qui manque à la consommation, et que le besoin demande qu'on se procure. Tout souverain attaché au bien public est obligé de se pourvoir de magasins abondamment fournis, pour suppléer à la mauvaise récolte et pour prévenir la famine. Nous avons vu en Allemagne dans les mauvaises années de 1771 et de 1772, les malheurs que la Saxe et les provinces de l'Empire ont soufferts, parce que cette précaution si utile avait été négligée. Le peuple broyait l'écorce des chênes, qui lui servait d'aliment. Cette misérable nourriture accéléra sa mort ; nombre de familles ont péri sans secours ; c'était une désolation universelle. D'autres, pâles, blêmes et décharnés, se sont expatriés pour chercher des secours ailleurs ; leur vue excitait la compassion, un cœur d'airain y aurait été sensible. Quel reproches leurs magistrats ne devaient-ils pas se faire d'être les spectateurs de ces calamités sans y pouvoir porter de remède !

Nous passons maintenant à un autre article, aussi intéressant peut-être. Il est peu de pays où les citoyens aient des opinions pareilles sur la religion ; elles diffèrent souvent entièrement ; il en est d'autres qu'on appelle des sectes. La question s'élève alors : Faut-il que tous les citoyens pensent de même, ou peut-on permettre à chacun de penser à sa guise ? Voilà d'abord de sombres politiques qui vous disent : Tout le monde doit être de la même opinion, pour que rien ne divise les citoyens. Le théologien y

ajoute : Quiconque ne pense pas comme moi est damné, et il ne convient pas que mon souverain soit roi des damnés ; il faut donc les rôtir dans ce monde, pour qu'ils prospèrent d'autant mieux dans l'autre. On répond à cela que jamais une société ne pensera de même ; que chez les nations chrétiennes la plupart sont anthropomorphites ; que chez les catholiques le grand nombre est idolâtre, parce qu'on ne me persuadera jamais qu'un manant sache distinguer le culte de latrie et d'hyperdulie ; il adore de bonne foi l'image qu'il invoque. Voilà donc nombre d'hérétiques dans toutes les sectes chrétiennes ; de plus, chacun croit ce qui lui paraît vraisemblable. On peu contraindre par violence un pauvre misérable à prononcer un certain formulaire, auquel il dénie son consentement intérieur ; ainsi le persécuteur n'a rien gagné. Mais si l'on remonte à l'origine de la société, il est de toute évidence que le souverain n'a aucun droit sur la façon de penser des citoyens. Ne faudrait-il pas être en démence pour se figurer que des hommes ont dit à un homme leur semblable : Nous vous élevons au-dessus de nous, parce que nous aimons à être esclaves, et nous vous donnons la puissance de diriger nos pensées à votre volonté ? Ils ont dit au contraire : Nous avons besoin de vous pour maintenir les lois auxquelles nous voulons obéir, pour nous gouverner sagement, pour nous défendre ; du reste, nous exigeons de vous que vous respectiez notre liberté. Voilà la sentence prononcée, elle est sans appel, et même cette tolérance est si avantageuse aux sociétés où elle est établie qu'elle fait le bonheur de l'État. Dès que tout culte est libre, tout le monde est tranquille ; au lieu que la persécution a donné lieu aux guerres civiles les plus sanglantes, les plus longues et les plus destructives. Le moindre mal qu'attire la persécution est de faire émigrer les persécutés ; la France a eu des provinces dont la population a souffert, et qui se ressentent encore de la révocation de l'édit de Nantes.

Ce sont là, en général, les devoirs qu'un prince doit

remplir. Afin qu'il ne s'en écarte jamais, il doit se rappeler souvent qu'il est homme comme le moindre de ses sujets ; s'il est le premier juge, le premier général, le premier financier, le premier ministre de la société, ce n'est pas pour qu'il représente, mais afin qu'il en remplisse les devoirs. Il n'est que le premier serviteur de l'État, obligé d'agir avec probité, avec sagesse et avec un entier désintéressement, comme si à chaque moment il devait rendre compte de son administration à ses citoyens. Ainsi il est coupable s'il prodigue l'argent du peuple, le produit des impôts, en luxe, en faste, en débauches, lui qui doit veiller aux bonnes mœurs qui sont les gardiennes des lois, qui doit perfectionner l'éducation nationale, et non la pervertir par de mauvais exemples. C'est un objet des plus importants que la conservation des bonnes mœurs dans leur intégrité ; le souverain peut y contribuer beaucoup en distinguant et récompensant les citoyens qui ont fait des actions vertueuses, en témoignant du mépris pour ceux dont la dépravation ne rougit plus de ses dérèglements. Le prince doit désapprouver hautement toute action déshonnête, et refuser des distinctions à ceux qui sont incorrigibles. Il est encore un objet intéressant qu'il ne faut pas perdre de vue et qui, s'il était négligé, porterait un préjudice irréparable aux bonnes mœurs ; c'est quand le prince distingue trop des personnes qui, sans mérite, possèdent de grandes richesses. Ces honneurs prodigués mal à propos confirment le public dans le préjugé vulgaire qu'il suffit d'avoir du bien pour être considéré. Dès lors l'intérêt et la cupidité secouent le frein qui les retenait ; chacun veut accumuler des richesses ; on emploie les voies les plus iniques pour les acquérir ; la corruption gagne, elle s'enracine, elle devient générale ; les hommes à talents, les hommes vertueux sont méprisés, et le public n'honore que ces bâtards de Midas dont la grande dépense et le faste l'éblouissent. Pour empêcher que les mœurs nationales ne se pervertissent jusqu'à cet horrible excès, le prince doit être sans cesse

attentif à ne distinguer que le mérite personnel et à ne témoigner que du mépris pour l'opulence sans mœurs et sans vertus. Au reste, comme le souverain est proprement le chef d'une famille de citoyens, le pêre de ses peuples, dans toutes les occasions il doit servir de dernier refuge aux malheureux, tenir lieu de père aux orphelins, secourir les veuves, avoir des entrailles pour le dernier misérable comme pour le premier courtisan, et répandre des libéralités sur ceux qui, privés de tout secours, ne peuvent trouver d'assistance que par ses bienfaits.

Voilà, selon les principes que nous avons établis au commencement de cet essai, l'idée exacte qu'on doit se former des devoirs d'un souverain et de la seule manière qui peut rendre bon et avantageux le gouvernement monarchique. Si bien des princes ont une conduite différente, il faut l'attribuer au peu de réflexion qu'ils ont fait sur leur institution et sur les devoirs qui en dérivent. Ils ont porté une charge dont ils ont méconnu le poids et l'importance, ils se sont fourvoyés faute de connaissances, car dans nos temps l'ignorance fait commettre plus de fautes que la méchanceté. Cette esquisse de souverain paraîtra peut-être aux censeurs l'archétype des stoiciens, l'idée de sage qu'ils avaient imaginé, qui n'exista jamais, et dont le seul Marc-Aurèle approcha le plus près. Nous souhaitons que ce faible essai soit capable de former des Marc-Aurèles ; ce serait la plus belle récompense à laquelle nous puissions nous attendre, et qui ferait en même temps le bien de l'humanité. Nous devons cependant ajouter à ceci qu'un prince qui fournirait la carrière laborieuse que nous avons tracée ne parviendrait pas à une perfection entière, parce qu'avec toute la bonne volonté possible, il pourrait se tromper dans le choix de ceux qu'il emploierait à l'administration des affaires ; parce qu'on pourrait lui représenter les choses sous un faux jour ; que ses ordres ne seraient pas exécutés ponctuellement ; qu'on voilerait des iniquités de façon qu'elles ne parviendraient pas à sa connaissance ;

que des employés durs et entiers mettraient trop de rigueur et de hauteur dans leur gestion ; enfin, parce que, dans un pays étendu, le prince ne saurait être partout. Tel est donc et sera le destin des choses d'ici-bas, que jamais on n'atteindra au degré de perfection qu'exige le bonheur des peuples, et qu'en fait de gouvernement, comme pour toute autre chose, il faudra se contenter de ce qui est le moins défectueux.

CHAPTER XII

INSTRUCTION AU MAJOR BORCKE (1751)

Je vous confie l'éducation de mon neveu, l'héritier présomptif de la couronne ; et comme il est très-différent de bien élever un particulier, ou celui qui est destiné à gouverner des États, je vous donne ici une instruction sur toutes les choses que vous devez observer.

I°. Touchant les maîtres :

Il faut que mon neveu parcoure l'histoire ancienne, qu'il sache les différentes monarchies qui se sont succédé, de l'histoire grecque surtout ce qui se passa dans la guerre d'Artaxerce, de Philippe et d'Alexandre, dans l'histoire romaine, le temps des guerres puniques et de César. Il ne faut point lui fatiguer la mémoire par les noms des princes qui se sont succédé, pourvu qu'il sache ceux des hommes illustres qui ont joué un grand rôle dans leur patrie.

Il ne suffit pas de lui apprendre l'histoire comme à un perroquet ; le grand usage des faits anciens est de les comparer aux modernes, de développer les causes qui ont produit des révolutions, de montrer comme pour l'ordinaire le vice est puni et la vertu récompensée. Il faut, de plus, lui faire remarquer que les historiens anciens ne sont pas toujours véridiques, et qu'il faut examiner et juger avant de croire. La partie de l'histoire la plus essentielle et la plus indispensable, c'est celle qui prend à Charlemagne et qui finit à nos jours ; j'entends par histoire celle de

l'Europe. Il la lui faut faire étudier avec soin, ne s'attacher qu'aux faits principaux, et n'entrer dans un plus grand détail qu'à la guerre de trente ans. Qu'il apprenne l'histoire de sa maison, cela va sans dire.

En apprenant la géographie, il est nécessaire de lui donner une idée des états et de leur gouvernement ; et comme cette étude va très bien avec celle de l'histoire, on peut, en lui enseignant l'une, lui apprendre l'autre en même temps.

Dans quelque temps on pourra lui faire un petit cours de logique dépouillé de toute pédanterie, et autant qu'il en faut pour qu'il discerne de lui-même le point faux d'un raisonnement et en quoi une proposition n'est pas juste. Ensuite on pourra lui faire lire les orateurs, Cicéron, Démosthène, quelques tragédies de Racine, &c.

Quand il aura quelques années de plus, on pourra lui donner un abrégé des opinions des philosophes et des différentes religions, sans lui inspirer de haine pour aucune, en lui faisant voir qu'elles adorent toutes Dieu, mais par des moyens différents. Il ne faut pas qu'il ait trop de considération pour le prêtre qui l'instruit, et il faut qu'il ne croie les choses qu'après les avoir examinées.

J'en reviens à la religion catholique. Elle est assez étendue en Silésie, dans les duchés de Clèves et ailleurs. Si cet enfant devenait calviniste fanatique, tout serait perdu. Il est très-nécessaire d'empêcher même le prêtre de dire dévotement des injures aux papistes ; mais le gouverneur doit adroitement faire sentir à son élève que rien n'est plus dangereux que lorsque les catholiques ont le dessus dans un pays, par rapport aux persécutions, à l'ambition des papes, et qu'un prince protestant est bien plus le maître chez lui qu'un prince catholique.

Il s'entend de soi-même que mon neveu apprenne à lire, à écrire, à compter ; ainsi je passe ces articles sous silence. Il est trop jeune pour apprendre les fortifications, il en sera temps quand il aura dix ou onze ans.

Les exercices comme danser, faire les armes et monter à cheval peuvent s'apprendre l'après-midi, dans le temps de la digestion. Si l'enfant avait envie d'apprendre le latin, le polonais ou l'italien, il ne dépendra que de lui ; mais s'il n'y marque pas d'inclination, il ne faut pas le presser là-dessus, de même que la musique.

Voici pour ses études et ses exercices. Votre grand art sera de lui faire le tout avec plaisir, de bannir la pédanterie de ces études et de lui en faire venir le goût ; c'est pourquoi, au commencement surtout, il ne faut pas charger la dose.

Nous en venons à présent à la plus grande et essentielle partie de l'éducation, qui est celle des mœurs. Ni vous ni toutes les puissances de l'univers ne sauraient changer le caractère d'un enfant ; tout ce que peut l'éducation, c'est de modérer la violence des passions. Traitez mon neveu comme un particulier qui doit faire sa fortune ; dites-lui que s'il a des défauts, ou s'il n'apprend rien, il sera méprisé de tout le monde. Citez lui l'exemple du M. de Schwedt et de Henri. Il ne faut point lui mettre du vent en tête, et l'élever tout simplement. Qu'il soit obligeant envers tout le monde, et que s'il fait une grossièreté à quelqu'un, que celui-là la lui rende sur-le-champ. Qu'il apprenne que tous les hommes sont égaux, et que la naissance n'est qu'une chimère, si elle n'est pas soutenue par le mérite. Laissez-le parler tout seul avec tout le monde, pour qu'il devienne hardi. Qu'importe qu'il parle de tort et travers ? On sait que c'est un enfant, et, dans toute son éducation, faites, autant qu'il sera en vous, qu'il agisse par lui-même, et qu'il ne s'accoutume point à se laisser mener ; que ses sottises soient à lui, de même que les bonnes choses qu'il fera.

Il est d'une très-grande importance de lui inspirer du goût pour le militaire ; pour cette raison il faut dans toutes les occasions lui dire tant vous-même que de lui faire dire par d'autres que tout homme de naissance qui n'est pas soldat n'est qu'un misérable. Il faut le mener tant qu'il

veut voir des troupes. On peut lui montrer les cadets et en faire venir avec le temps cinq ou six chez lui faire l'exercice ; que cela soit un amusement et non pas un devoir, car le grand art est de lui donner du goût pour ce métier, et ce serait tout perdre que de l'ennuyer ou de le rebuter. Qu'il parle à tout le monde, à un cadet, à un soldat, à un bourgeois, à un officier, pour qu'il devienne hardi.

Qu'on lui inspire surtout de l'attachement pour ce pays, et que personne ne lui tienne des discours que de bon patriote ; et sur toute sorte de sujets et de discours on peut y glisser quelques réflexions de morale, qui tendent à lui prêcher l'humanité, la bonté et les sentiments qu'il convient à un homme d'honneur et surtout à un prince d'avoir.

Je veux que, quand il sera plus âgé, il commence à faire le service de lieutenant, pour qu'il passe tout les grades ; ainsi il ne faut point lui mettre du vent dans la tête. Que les officiers qui dînent avec lui l'attaquent et l'agacent pour le rendre hardi et gai, et qu'il voie le plus de monde que se pourra. Dans ses heures de récréation, s'il a envie de voir des enfants de son âge, cela ne fera pas de mal ; il est un peu taciturne, et il est très-nécessaire de l'éveiller ; c'est pourquoi vous vous appliquerez à le rendre le plus gai que possible. Dans toutes les occasions vous aurez grande attention à lui inculquer le respect et l'amour qu'il doit à son père, à sa mère, et la déférence envers ses parents. Quand vous le connaîtrez davantage il faudra voir quelle sera sa passion. Dieu nous garde de la détruire ! mais travaillons à la modérer. Quand il est dans son particulier, qu'il ne fasse jamais des choses sans en rendre raison, à moins que ce ne soit dans ses heures de récréation. S'il est souple, soyez doux, s'il est rétif, donnez-vous toute l'autorité qu'il vous convient, punissez-le en lui ôtant l'épée, en le mettant aux arrêts, et, tant qu'il se peut, en le piquant d'honneur ; jusqu'à présent il paraît fort doux, mais avec l'âge il se développera davantage.

Vous rendrez toutes les semaines compte de sa conduite au père, et à moi tous les mois. S'il y a quelque cas extraordinaire, vous pourrez toujours recourrir à moi. Ne le rendez pas timide par de trop grands ménagements pour sa santé, ou par crainte que malheur n'arrive. Il faut avoir un grand soin de lui, mais il ne faut pas qu'il s'en aperçoive, cela le rendrait douillet, timide et pusillanime. Mon frère pourra régler ses heures comme il le jugera à propos, et vous pourrez prendre vos mesures là-dessus.

Cette instruction n'est bonne que jusqu'à l'âge de dix à douze ans, où il vous en faudra une autre proportionnée aux progrès de mon neveu, à son âge et aux circonstances.

Fait à Potsdam, ce 24 Septembre 1751.

(*Signé*) Frédéric.

CHAPTER XIII

AU MINISTRE D'ÉTAT, COMTE DE FINCKENSTEIN, A BERLIN

Instruction Secrète pour le Comte de Finck

Berlin, 10 *Janvier* 1757.

Dans la situation critique où se trouvent nos affaires, je dois vous donner mes ordres, pour que, dans tous les cas malheureux qui sont dans la possibilité des évènements, vous soyez autorisé aux partis qu'il faut prendre.

S'il arrivait—de quoi le Ciel préserve !—qu'une de mes armées en Saxe fût totalement battue, ou bien que les Français chassassent les Hanoveriens de leur pays et s'y établissent et nous menaçassent d'une invasion dans la Vieille-Marche, ou que les Russes pénétrassent par la Nouvelle-Marche, il faut sauver la famille royale, les principaux dicastères, les ministres et le directoire. Si nous sommes battus en Saxe du côté de Leipzig, le lieu le plus propre pour le transport de la famille et du trésor est à Cüstrin ; il faut, en ce cas, que la famille royale et tous ci-dessus nommés aillent, escortés de toute la garnison, à Cüstrin. Si les Russes entraient par la Nouvelle-Marche, ou qu'il nous arrivât un malheur en Lusace, il faudrait que tout se transportât à Magdebourg. Enfin, le dernier refuge est à Stettin ; mais il ne faut y aller qu'à la dernière extrémité. La garnison, la famille royale et le trésor sont inséparables et vont toujours ensemble ; il faut y ajouter les diamants de la couronne et l'argenterie des grands apartements, qui en

pareil cas, ainsi que la vaisselle d'or, doit être incontinent monnayée.

S'il arrivait que je fusse tué, il faut que les affaires continuent leur train sans la moindre altération et sans qu'on s'aperçoive qu'elles sont en d'autres mains ; et en ce cas il faut hâter serments et hommages, tant ici qu'en Prusse, et surtout en Silésie.

Si j'avais la fatalité d'être pris prisonnier par l'ennemi, je défends qu'on ait le moindre égard pour ma personne, ni qu'on fasse la moindre réflexion sur ce que je pourrais écrire de ma détention. Si pareil malheur m'arrivait, je veux me sacrifier pour l'État, et il faut qu'on obéisse à mon frère, lequel, ainsi que tous mes ministres et généraux, me répondront de leur tête qu'on n'offrira ni province ni rançon pour moi, et que l'on continuera la guerre, en poussant ses avantages tout comme si je n'avais jamais existé dans le monde.

J'espère et je dois croire que vous, comte Finck, n'aurez pas besoin de faire usage de cette instruction ; mais, en cas de malheur, je vous autorise à l'employer, et, marque que c'est, après une mûre et saine délibération, ma ferme et constante volonté, je la signe de ma main, et la munis de mon cachet.

FRÉDÉRIC, R.

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